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THE GITANA.

Expressly translated for the FAVORITE from the French of Xavier de Montepin.

XXI.

QUIRINO TURNS UP.

Morales had the best reasons in the world for declining to accompany Tancred on his visit to the captain of the "Marsouin." In the first place the worthy and gallant Gitano had not presented himself to Mathurin Lemonnier under his true colors, nor as a Spanish gentleman, but in the disguise of an old negro who had been commissioned by his master to make arrangements for taking passage to France.

Furthermore it was his intention to resume his disguise as quickly as possible and follow his brother-in-law, in order to make sure that the latter did not engage in any imprudent conversation that might compromise them.

When Tancred returned to the garden Carmen was alone.

"Where is Don Guzman?" asked the young man.

"My brother just left me," she answered. "He was called away suddenly on important business, and will not return before evening."

Berenice here made her appearance to announce that the *volante* was ready.

"Come back soon, my love," whispered Carmen as she kissed her husband.

"However quickly I may return," Tancred whispered back, "I am always too long away from you."

The young man had hardly taken his seat in the carriage when Morales, once more metamorphosed into a negro, silly perched himself at the back of the *volante* in the manner we have already once described.

On arriving at the quay Tancred hailed a boat and was rowed off at once to the "Marsouin." Since Don José's death the captain had returned to his own quarters or board, and he in person received the young officer.

"Sir," said he, with a bow, "unless I am mistaken, you are the Chevalier de Najac."

"You are quite right, captain," returned Tancred, in amazement at the recognition.

"I was about to do myself the honor of paying you a visit."

"Then you know where I live?"

"You lodge, I believe, with a fellow-countryman of ours, a Breton, named Eloi Sandric."

"Captain, I am longing to ask you a question or two."

"Command me, Monsieur the Chevalier. I shall be happy to answer any questions you may put to me."

"Well, then, to what should I have had the pleasure of attributing your visit? And how came you to know both my name and my lodging?"

"The objet of my visit would have been to inform you that I hold a berth at your disposal in case it should be your wish to return home."

"But I was given to understand that you were refusing to take passengers."

"I was doing so, but my orders are to make an exception in your case."

"I am extremely grateful to the person who gave you the order. May I ask his name?"

"Certainly, his name will give you an answer



"HE IS GOING TO MURDER ME," THOUGHT THE GITANO.

to the second question you put to me just now. It was Don José Rovero, from whose funeral I have just returned, who gave me the order to make an exception in your case, and who furnished me with your name and address."

"The poor, kind-hearted old gentleman!" exclaimed Tancred, the tears standing in his eyes. "In his last moments he thought of me! Poor man!"

"He was a good man, indeed, Monsieur the Chevalier. But it is useless to mourn for him; he is in heaven. It is his poor daughter that we should pity."

"Poor Annunziata! Poor child! What will become of her, alone in the world, and the possessor of an immense fortune?"

"Thank God, she will not be entirely alone. In France she will find a home. Philip Le Vaillant, Don José's old friend, the merchant of Havre and owner of this vessel, will be a father to her, and Mr. Oliver, Mr. Le Vaillant's son, will be a brother to her."

"When does she leave?"

"We sail in three days."

"What! Does Mademoiselle Rovero go with you?"

"Yes, Monsieur the Chevalier. And it is owing to Mademoiselle Annunziata's presence on board that, in deference to Don José's last wishes, I take no other passengers."

"Ha!" thought Tancred, "I begin to understand now."

"But, as I said before," continued the captain, "an exception has been made in your favor. Is it your intention to profit thereby?"

"Certainly, captain. That is to say if you can take upon yourself to extend the exception to two persons more, whom I cannot leave behind."

"Who are thy?"

"My wife and my brother-in-law."

"Your wife! I was not aware that you were married. Don José made no mention of it."

"He was no more aware of it than were you. I have only been married eight days."

The captain shook his head in an undecided and embarrassed manner.

"Captain," said Tancred, noticing the other's embarrassment, "I understand, as an officer, that orders must be obeyed. If your conscience insists that yours must be carried out strictly and to the letter, I will withdraw my request, and you shall sail without me."

"It is not that," said Lemonnier, more embarrassed than ever.

"I have it," cried Tancred, with sudden inspiration. "You do not know the lady, and perhaps you are not quite certain that she is my wife. Is that it?"

"There is something in that," admitted the captain, evidently much relieved.

"Well, in that case you may set your mind at ease. Eight days ago I was married at my brother-in-law's house by the prior of the Barnabite monastery to the sister of a Spanish gentleman of high birth and great wealth, Don Guzman Morales y Tulipano."

"God forgive me, Monsieur the Chevalier. There will be no difficulty, and I shall be happy to receive Madam and Don Guzman on the "Marsouin."

"Many thanks, captain. I am extremely grateful to you."

"It is not me you have to thank, sir, but the last wishes of a dead man."

"I am none the less obliged to you, I assure you. And you say you sail in three days."

"In three days without fail, wind and weather permitting. If you have any heavy goods to ship it would be as well to send them at once."

Cordially shaking the captain's hand Tancred went down the side of the vessel, and re-entered his boat.

Half-an-hour after he found himself again with Carmen.

"Well, my love," asked the latter, "how have you succeeded? Have you made a satisfactory arrangement?"

"It is all settled. We leave in three days for France."

"What happiness!" cried the Gitana, throwing her beautifully curved arms round her husband's neck. "It seems to me that in your own beautiful country you will love me still more."

"Is that possible?" asked Tancred in a tender whisper.

Yet he took care not to tell his wife that Annunziata was to be their fellow-passenger.

"With her woman's instinct," he argued, "she guesses that I was on the point of falling in love with the poor girl, and is jealous. She might refuse to go, did she know that Annunziata is to be our fellow-passenger."

Let us go back a few days and return to one of our characters, who, though a mere outsider in the story, is about to play a terrible part. We refer to Quirino.

On returning to Havana, the day after the scene with Carmen, the semi-savage, as the Gitana called him, found the hut that had been occupied by the brother and sister deserted.

The door was wide open, and the remains of broken furniture to which Morales had set fire were smouldering on the hearth. It was evident that both Morales and Carmen had quitted their former home with the intention of returning no more.

Quirino's anger at the sight that greeted him was only equalled by his despair. In a few moments he left the place and plunged into the surrounding thicket, and careless of the scorpions and cascabels that lurked in the thick grass beneath his feet, threw himself on the ground beneath a spreading tree, hid his face in his hands and began to think.

Morales knew, as we have already heard him say, that an Indian rarely threatens what he does not carry out, and that his vengeance is implacable.

Quirino was pondering on the best means of gratifying his thirst for vengeance.

"If they are still in the city," he thought, "I am sure of them; and if they have gone away I will follow them to the ends of the world."

This resolution made, he rose, and took the road to the harbor. On the quay he learnt that owing to contrary winds, no vessel had left the port since the previous day. This simplified his task, for it was evident that the brother and sister could not be far off.

In the evening Quirino returned to his own hut in the forest. Providing himself with a thousand dollars from his store, and a couple of muskets, he returned to the city and took up his abode in the shanty that Carmen and Morales had abandoned only two days before.

The next day, at daybreak, he assumed the costume of a *cargador*, or stevedore, and having completed his disguise by staining his skin a deep brown, entered upon his new character of spy. For two days he lounged about the harbor and at the corners of the principal streets, but

nothing happened to reward his perseverance. Still he did not despair.

"Sooner or later," he would say to himself, "Carmen and Morales will begin to get over the fright with which I inspire them. Just now they are hiding, but this can not last for ever. One of them will appear one of these days; I shall follow, and then—" a terribly suggestive gesture completed the threat.

XXII.

THE CARGADOR.

The time has gone rapidly by. It is the day previous to that fixed for the departure of the "Marsouin."

Poor Annunziata, unable to remain in the house in which she had spent so many happy days, and which her father's death had now rendered insupportable, had already, with her mulatto waiting-woman, taken possession of the little saloon and two sleeping berths which formed her quarters on board the vessel that was to carry her to France.

For his part Morales, unwilling that it should be said of so exalted a personage that he had embarked without a sufficient quantity of baggage, had sent on board a number of huge chests and packing cases, carefully nailed up, and containing a large assortment of the heaviest stones.

In his negro's disguise the Gitano was promenading up and down the quay, indulging in pleasant anticipations of the future.

"To-morrow," he muttered, as his eyes rested on the "Marsouin," I shall be on board that noble vessel, I shall see the sails spread and fill in the wind and the keel cleave through the blue sea; every moment increasing the distance between me and Quirino. No more danger; no more fears. A successful voyage in fine weather, with favorable winds, and a few months hence Don Guzman Morales y Tulipano, brother-in-law of the Chevalier Tancred de Najac, officer in the fleet of His Majesty King Louis XV, will land in France with a high sounding title and his pockets full of gold pieces. Ah, caramba! I think our friend Don Guzman will lead a sufficiently jolly life—especially when Carmen has paid me the ten thousand dollars she owes me."

In good humor at the pleasant prospect that opened before him Morales began gaily to hum the air of an at that time well-known Parisian song in praise of riches, which formed part of his musician's stock in trade.

Alas, poor Morales! What would have become of him and his brave airs had he been able to guess what was going on behind him, as he boldly marched up and down, protected by his disguise, and relishingly inhaled the salt sea air as though he breathed liberty and distinction from afar.

We, however, more privileged than he, can see what escaped his notice.

As he promenaded up and down, Morales had more than once rubbed against a half-naked-mulatto, in the costume of a cargador, who was lying dozing in the full blaze of the sun. The sleeper's eyes had opened the first time the Gitano passed, but seeing only a negro, he shut them again.

Just then Morales began to sing. The cargador started as he heard the voice, low and indistinct as it was. When Morales had once more passed him he raised himself on his elbow, and with a tremendous yawn, as though he had just been awakened, gathered himself up and crouched on his heels against a neighboring wall.

In his position he examined the singer closely.

"It is he," he murmured, after a few moments' scrutiny.

Then, seeing that Morales was making his way into the city, he rose and followed, taking care to put sufficient distance between himself and his prey to avoid suspicion.

When the Spaniard stopped, the cargador stopped too; and the two resumed their way at the same moment. In this manner the chase continued until Morales, having passed through a long, deserted street, halted in front of a small villa, and opening the gate with a key which he drew from his pocket, disappeared.

"So this is the hiding-place," muttered Quirino, for he it was who had so assiduously tracked the Spaniard.

Choosing a convenient post of observation at a short distance he stretched himself under a wall and once more pretended to sleep, keeping a good look-out the while on the door through which Morales had vanished.

During two whole hours he remained motionless in this position, watching the gate, and endeavoring in his own mind to account for the street-singer's apparent rise in life. At the end of that time the gate opened once more. Quirino's heart almost ceased to beat. Was Carmen coming out? No, it was a young negro, the *calesero* of the *volante* hired, as we know, by Morales, who was slipping out to spend an hour at the tavern in drinking tafia, the usual beverage of the lower classes in Cuba. For a bottle of his favorite liquor the poor devil would have sold his soul.

As the negro passed Quirino raised himself, imitating once more the yawns and gestures of a newly awakened man.

"Hullo, comrade," he cried, in the peculiar jargon of the Cuban slaves, "where are you off to?"

"Goin' to drink," replied the other.

"All alone?"

"Yes."

"It's poor work drinking alone."

"Not a bit, Tafia's always good."

"That makes no difference. It's better to drink in company. Will you come along with me?"

The negro looked at Quirino with some suspicion, for the *cargador's* brown face was anything but inviting.

"Well, what d'ye say?" retired Quirino.

"Who pays?" asked the *calesero*.

"I do."

"That so?"

"Don't I say so?"

"Where's yer money?"

"Look here," and Quirino drew from his pocket a handful of small silver which he displayed before the dazzled eyes of the negro.

"Come along," returned the latter linking his arms in that of his new found friend, of whose solvency there could no longer be any doubt.

In a few moments the two were seated at a table in the back room of a tavern, with a bottle of rum, and a couple of glasses between them.

It is not our intention to follow the conversation that took place. It is sufficient to say that before an hour had passed Quirino knew all that the negro could tell him of what went on inside the house occupied by the brother and sister, including the sonorous, high sounding title, and the rank assumed by Morales, and the marriage of Carmen to a French naval officer. He did not learn, however, as the negro himself was unaware of the fact, that the ex-musician and the newly married couple were to leave Havana the following day.

Before the pair parted, a mysterious agreement had been entered into between them and the *calesero* went his way rejoicing, with twenty-five dollars—in his eyes a mine of wealth—in his pocket, as an earnest of what he was to receive if he faithfully carried out his part of the compact.

On leaving the tavern Quirino returned at a rapid pace toward the Puerta de Tierra, shut himself up in the dismantled hut, and went out no more that day.

The following day, as we have already said, was that fixed for the departure of the "Marsouin."

Early in the morning Tancred went on board to inquire at what hour he should bring down his party.

"Monsieur the Chevalier," returned the captain, in answer to his question, "the tide turns at three, so I shall weigh anchor at a quarter to. If it is your wish to come on board at the last moment, be here at half past two. Don't be later, for notwithstanding the profound respect I have for you, and my desire to oblige you, it will be impossible for me to wait for you. I am longing to put a few hundred leagues of blue water between Mademoiselle Annunziata and the city that has so many painful associations for her."

"I understand your feeling, captain, perfectly; and I respect you for it. But you need have no fear that we shall be late."

"Then I may reckon on you; at half-past two at the latest."

On returning to the city Tancred went to bid farewell to his late hosts, Eloi Sandrie and his wife, whom he acquainted with the fact of his marriage, and the strange manner in which it had been brought to pass.

It was past twelve when he returned to Carmen, who was already in her travelling dress, a charmingly tasteful costume, that set off to wonderful advantage her graceful Andalusian figure.

"Oh, Carmen, how charming you look," cried the young man.

"I am quite aware of it, my love," she returned coquettishly. "But that is not the question in point just now. Have you seen the captain?"

"I have just left him."

"At what time does he sail?"

"We must be on board at the latest by half-past two. If we are not there he will sail without us."

"With all my heavy baggage on board," exclaimed Morales. "That would be too bad. We must be exact."

"Yes, indeed," added Carmen.

"We are quite ready," continued Morales. "Berenice has just gone to fetch a palanquin for Carmen, and you and I will go in the *volante*."

"Very good," returned Tancred.

Since the preceding day Morales had been extremely troubled at the idea that it would be impossible for him to go on board in his borrowed disguise. Still it was hardly likely, he reasoned with himself, that Quirino would light on him just at the last moment. The chances were a thousand to one against it, and every precaution must be taken to render the likelihood of detection impossible. He would send on the palanquin in advance, and he and Tancred would follow in the *volante* at a rapid pace. It would be impossible to recognize the occupants of the vehicle amid the clouds of dust raised by the horse and the wheels.

At two o'clock then, Carmen started in the palanquin, and a quarter of an hour after Morales and Tancred entered the *volante*.

"Segua!" cried the Spaniard to the *calesero*, to whom he had already indicated the route he was to follow.

The negro dug his spurs into his horse's flanks, and started off at a gallop.

"The horse is bolting!" cried Tancred.

"Not at all," returned Morales. "He is a young animal and full of spirit. He is only playful. Besides the *calesero* knows his business. There is no danger, my dear fellow, none at all."

And he added to himself, with a deep drawn sigh of relief.

"In ten minutes I shall no longer be afraid of Quirino."

XXIII.

THERE'S MANY A SLIP, ETC.

Morales was in high glee until an untoward accident came to damp his happiness. The *volante* had just reached a corner formed by the junction of two streets. That on the left led to the harbor, and that on the right stretched to the Puerta de Tierra.

"A la izquierda!" cried Morales.

The order was not obeyed. The horse turned sharp to the right and flew off at a faster pace than ever.

"That's very strange," said the Gitano. "Did you not hear me?" he cried to the *calesero*, "I said, to the left."

"I heard you, señor," replied the man, "but the horse is off; I can't hold him."

"I thought so," said Tancred.

"Wretch!" screamed Morales. "You shall pay for this!"

"Señor," returned the *calesero*, "it isn't my fault. You told me to drive as hard as I could. It's not my fault if he's got the bit between his teeth."

"Try and stop him then, caramba."

"Don Guzman," interposed Tancred, "there is, I think, nothing to fear. The horse will soon be winked, and stop of his own accord, and we can turn back."

"But the time we are losing, my dear chevalier," expostulated the Gitano, despondently. "If we are late they will sail without us."

"I confess it is very annoying, but it cannot be helped."

At this moment the *volante* swept through the Puerta de Tierra. On the left hand side of the road was the hut that Morales and Carmen had quitted a fortnight before. Suddenly a man dressed in grey jumped from the bushes that surrounded the cabin, and took up a position in the middle of the road.

Morales turned deadly pale and almost fell back in his seat. He recognized Quirino.

"We are lost!" he murmured.

"How lost?" asked Tancred in amazement. "It is he—Quirino," returned Morales in an indistinct voice.

The name was new to Tancred.

"My dear brother-in-law," he asked, "pray tell me who may this Quirino be, and why are we lost on meeting him?"

Morales had no time to reply. The horse galloped at full speed to the spot where the Indian stood.

"The man will be run over," thought Tancred. "If this is the Quirino Don Guzman fears so much there will be very little of him left to fear in another minute."

The Frenchman was wrong. Just as the horse's head was about to strike him, the Indian seized him by the bridle and held him with an iron grip. Thus brought to a sudden stop the animal reared and fell sideways, breaking the pole as he came down.

Tancred was on the point of jumping down to assist the stranger, but the latter glared at him with such unmistakable ferocity that he thought better of it. Was the man crazy, he wondered.

Morales would have liked to hide himself under the cushions.

"Get down!" cried Quirino in an imperious voice.

"Hullo, friend," cried Tancred, whose patrician pride revolted at this unceremonious treatment, "who the deuce are you, that you talk like that to me?"

"Who I am?" returned the Indian with emphasis, pointing to the Gitano, "ask him. He will tell you that I am Quirino."

"Still that mysterious name! The mere fact of your name being Quirino does not constitute a social position. But whoever you may be, what do you want with me?"

"I want to kill you."

Tancred jumped down from the *volante* and burst out laughing.

"My good man," he cried, "your intentions are no doubt admirable, and your frankness in avowing them is worthy of all praise, but pardon me for asking, as I have not the honor of your acquaintance, the reasons for which you thirst for my life, and in what my death can me of service to you."

Quirino seized Morales by the collar of the coat and dragged him violently out of the *volante*. With a cry of terror the poor wretch fell on his knees. Pointing to him as he grovelled in the dust, the Indian replied:

"Ask this man, he will tell you."

Then addressing the astonished *calesero*, who recognized in the Indian hunter the *cargador* of the preceding day, and watched with gaping mouth and wide-opened eyes the strange scene that was passing before him, he threw him the promised fifty dollars, and in a tone that admitted of no trifling bid him go home.

The man did not wait to be told twice, and pocketing the purse lost no time in whipping up his horse and driving off. He did not go far however. Some hundred yards off he drew up the *volante* behind the projecting angle of a wall, and diving among the bushes crawled on his hands and knees to a sheltered spot where, himself unseen, he could see, hear all that went on,

Tancred, in the meantime, could hardly restrain an expression of disgust at the miserably abject condition of Morales. The wretched Gitano grovelled in the middle of the dusty road clasping his trembling hands with an expression of the most intense terror.

"My dear brother-in-law," said the Frenchman at last, "Señor Quirino here pretends that you are able to inform me of the cause of the hatred he appears to bear me. It seems to me very strange, but I look to you for a solution of the enigma. Tell me what you know about it."

"Alas!" was all Morales could murmur.

"Tell me quickly, I beg you. Señor Quirino appears to be in a hurry, and, moreover, you know we have no time to lose."

"Alas!" murmured the Gitano a second time.

"He is trembling with fear," said the Indian, "You will get nothing out of him, the coward." As he spoke he spurned the writhing figure with his foot.

Tancred crimsoned with indignation. For a moment he felt strongly inclined to throw himself upon the Indian. Unfortunately he was unarmed, while Quirino carried, besides his musket, a long hanger in his belt.

"Señor Quirino," he burst out with a threatening gesture, I forbid you to insult in my presence a gentleman whose relation I have become."

"A gentleman!" returned the hunter disdainfully, placing his foot on Morales' shoulder, "this is too much. This pretended gentleman who has been bragging to you of his high birth and his immense wealth, is nothing but a miserable gitano, a fugitive gipsy, a bandit belonging to the scum and off-scouring of the world. But little over a fortnight ago he lived in that hut you see there; and his sister Carmen were earning their livelihood by singing in the streets and gambling houses."

"It is a lie!" thundered Tancred furiously.

But a vague recollection took him back to the gambling hell in the Cala du Paseo, the one-eyed musician and the dancing girl. He looked at his brother-in-law. Yes, supplying the black bandage and the broad-brimmed sombrero, it was the same. Carmen too; the long glossy hair, the beaming eyes, the white shoulders and the exquisitely turned ankles, he recognized them now.

"Great Heavens!" he burst out as furiously as before, "you are right! The villainous scoundrels, how they have deceived me!"

Morales shuddered.

"In any case," he thought, "I am done for if Quirino spares me the Chevalier will kill me."

Tancred, who had been absorbed in his bitter reflections, raised his head.

"Sir," said he, addressing Quirino in a firm tone of voice, "I have been deceived, and it is evident that I have been playing the part of fool, but that only concerns myself and those whom I shall call to task for the deception. It does not explain the hatred you evince towards me. Do you wish to take my life because I have been made a fool of?"

"I wish to take your life because Carmen was my betrothed," replied the Indian; "because I have sworn that while I live Carmen shall belong to none but me, and that the day her hand touches the hand of another man, I will crush that man, and her with him. I am an Indian, señor, and when an Indian has sworn to do a thing he does it."

"Exactly," returned Tancred ironically. "I understand perfectly the blinding nature of the oath. So you are going to kill me. Very good. Only as I am unarmed you will have to assassinate me."

"No," replied the Indian picking up from the ground the fellow musket to that he carried slung over his shoulder. "I do not wish to assassinate you. We will fight with the same weapons and the same chances."

"Ha, a duel!" cried Tancred, "A duel with muskets, eh! I have fought often enough in my life, but always with a sword. It will be something new. I shall not be sorry to have such an original adventure to relate when I get back to France."

Quirino shook his head ominously, as much as if to say: "I doubt very much if you will ever get back."

"Where shall we fight?" continued Tancred.

"In this enclosure," replied Quirino, pointing to a thickly overgrown garden that surrounded the hut.

"So be it."

Quirino held out the two muskets crossed one over the other.

"Take one."

Tancred took the nearest one.

"I am ready," said he, "let us make haste."

"Go on first," returned Quirino, "I will follow you."

Stooping down he seized Morales by the collar, raised him to his feet and pushed him roughly forward into the enclosure.

"He is going to murder me," thought the Gitano. "My last hour is come! Great St. James of Compostella, take pity on me!"

(To be continued.)

AT THE SEA-SIDE.

"Breakfast not over! Whatever have you been about?" Milly Gray uttered these words somewhat reproachfully, as one morning about ten o'clock she entered the room where her friend Caroline Melville was sitting. Her glance had fallen on the dainty china spread out upon a snowy damask table-cloth in the centre, the order and purity of which, as well as the methodical arrangement of the rest of the neat, tasteful furniture, showed the correctness of her surmise.

The lady of the house who was thus addressed, occupies a chair beside the open casement, through which, on a fresh breeze blowing in off the neighboring sea, the sweet scent of flowers was wafted from a garden underneath. The grass-grown street beyond, along which she had from time to time been anxiously looking, was now entirely deserted, all the inhabitants of the fashionable watering place of M— being busily occupied within doors, discussing their coffee, hot rolls, and the difficult problem of how another day's enjoyment was to be obtained. What was most unusual with Caroline Melville, her fingers at that moment were unoccupied, and no book was lying open before her; but her eyes had in them the dreamy, far-off look which showed that, though bodily at rest, she was "revolving a thousand matters in her wandering imagination." In spite of her graceful figure, as she momentarily stood up, she would by most people have been considered plain, though the marks of character in her expression, and in the contour of her finely-arched forehead and eyebrows, were those of a depth and purity which fascinate good men here and there like the hidden sources of some gently flowing and beneficent river. She was not over twenty, but being one of an orphan family, which included an elder brother, Robert, a younger sister, Catherine, and herself, the cares and responsibility of housekeeping had devolved upon her.

"We are waiting for Robert," she pleasantly responded; adding, in reply to the glances of inquiry cast by the intruder into every corner of the apartment, "Kate, has gone up stairs to dress."

"And where is Robert?" asked the pretty, pouting Milly, as if she had a right to know.

"He is gone out for his morning bath, and to take a walk, I suppose. Come here, Milly, and sit down."

"If he be too late I shall never forgive him!" and the bright, happy girl crossed over briskly to a soft, velvet-cushioned ottoman close by her friend's side. Her robes of white muslin falling in a cloud against the other's dark-gray dressing-gown, contrasted strongly with it, and with the dark shadows of the closely-drawn Venetian blind. "What are you about?" she demanded gayly, and her girlish soprano contrasted as strongly with the other's more womanly mezzo-piano.

"I have been expecting Robert for the last hour and more. I cannot settle myself to work."

"Why do you not go and get yourself dressed?"

"It will be soon enough for that when Robert has come in."

"But suppose he be too late? We are to set off in half an hour."

"Then his breakfast will be to make. Besides I don't care about the picnic. This morning I feel rather sad."

"What are you sad about, you melancholy old darling?" and Milly, perching herself actively on her friend's knee, threw one arm round her neck to comfort her.

"Robert is a very dear brother, and we are going to lose him," was the reply, spoken in an almost tearful whisper.

"What do you mean?" asked Milly, looking anxiously up into the other's face.

"You are going to rob us of him, little Milly."

"Is that all?" exclaimed she, reassured, and bursting out into a merry laugh: "Then I rob you of him every day, but he soon comes back again."

"After he is married he will never come back again, to be just the same as he once was. I cannot help feeling a little sorry, and I had such an unpleasant dream about it last night."

"Robert will always be the same. He never changes. I don't believe in dreams one bit. Tell me what it was about."

"Oh, never mind the dream, Milly dear. No doubt I shall soon get accustomed to our new mode of life."

"You must tell me about the dream, or I shall think it is with me that you are vexed."

For one or two thoughtful moments Caroline remained silent, and then asked—"Do you remember the day when we were surrounded by the tide on the rocks opposite Redburn Castle, exactly five summers since?"

The intensely sober look of Milly's face as she nodded slowly in response, showed that the event was vividly recalled.

"And do you recollect how, on running together in our first alarm, we stood for a few minutes at the water's edge, looking anxiously towards the coast?"

Again Milly silently nodded a response.

"In my dream that scene recurred; and the strange, shrinking horror that I afterwards felt whilst wading behind Robert as he bore you and Catherine in his arms above the surface of the waves, came back upon me. Their quick, cold

ripples hurrying relentlessly past, seemed to laugh at us, as if to say we should never escape their grasp. The sight of the sea has been painful to me ever since."

The face of Milly was pressed still closer to her friend's breast as these circumstances were brought to mind.

"But last night," resumed Caroline excitedly, "Robert, instead of laughing and talking to keep our spirits up, as he then did, appeared perplexed and anxious, and when we looked for his assistance he turned himself away. Going to the fisherman's little boat, which was floating further down the beach, he got into it, and immediately it went adrift, so that we were left alone upon the rocks."

"How I detest those little boats!" broke in Milly, impetuously; "Robert shall never go in one."

"At first he seemed to beckon me across; then he lay down in the boat, and as it moved slowly away, it assumed a peculiar shape, and was black like a —"

"Do not mention it!" cried Milly, terror-stricken, and holding a tiny, pink-gloved hand over the other's mouth. "How dreadful to have such a dream! What became of the boat?"

"Gradually it disappeared. Attempting to follow after caused me to waken up."

"What a disagreeable dream! I should be unhappy for a month after having such a one. But it is not like getting married to sail away like that. I believe it means something else;" and then Milly, on whose brow sorrow rested only as the bright sunshine on a flower-bed is obscured by the shadow of a passer-by, started to her feet, brushing away the tears which had risen up, and exclaiming, "Whatever is that girl Kate about?"

"Stay a moment," said Caroline, detaining her by throwing one arm round her waist, "I want to claim an elder sister's privilege for once, and give you some advice. You know that ever since our childhood Robert and I have been playmates and confidants, and you will therefore bear with me. After your marriage I shall miss him sadly at the first, and although our new home will be so near, it will be so different for both Catherine and me to live with our aunt. We almost worship him, and have devoted ourselves entirely to his welfare ever since our mother's death. You will not let him feel the difference too much?"

"Caroline, do you imagine?"

"I know you will be good to him; and you must not think that I grudge him to you in the least. On the contrary, I have always persuaded him not to put off the wedding on our account. But in spite of your long engagement, I hardly think even you know how noble and self-sacrificing he really is; and how in the midst of his studies and hard work during the winter months, he neglects his own comforts and enjoyments. The work in his new parish will be harder still, therefore you must do all you can to lighten his responsibilities at home; and although the stipend will be large, the expenses will also be very great, so you will have to keep an exact account of both. You know how punctual in his habits he is, too, and must —"

"Really, Caroline, I don't want such advice as that," interposed Milly at length. "If Robert is such a cross old bachelor, I would rather —" tossing her little head to complete the sentence.

"Robert is not cross, but almost carelessly good-natured. That is why I take parting with him so much to heart. Promise me one thing, that you will be very good to him; which is all I want."

"Well, I do promise that most faithfully. You know I would do anything for Robert." Then they threw their arms round each other's necks and embraced fervently. Notwithstanding the contrast in their characters—or perhaps, rather by reason of that contrast—Caroline Melville and her intended sister, Milly Gray were devotedly attached.

"Now I must go and see what that girl Kate is doing," exclaimed the latter, turning round and moving quickly off to find her own way to the floor above.

The house was two-storied and compact, being built, as well as furnished, more for comfort than appearance. Also, like most sea-side residences, it was full of curious knick-knacks brought home by sailors from all corners of the world, or gathered by scientific enthusiasts as specimens from the neighboring coast.

On the stairs Milly met "that girl Kate," as she had called her, coming down; and arm-in-arm they entered the apartment where the previous conversation had taken place. Both were about an age, though the former was small and fair and the latter rather tall and dark. They were more companionable than Milly and the elder sister Caroline, notwithstanding their occasional tiffs. On the present occasion they were dressed in their gayest and gauziest costumes, trimmed with blue and pink, crimson and purple, as best suited their complexions. The broad sun-hats and lace veils under which their faces were "shown, yet hidden," made it hard to determine which was the prettier of the two.

This day was to be a mad and merry one with them, and on coming together their hilarity knew no bounds. Though there was nothing particular to laugh at, peal after peal of soft, silvery laughter echoed through the room.

"Carry, dear, pray draw up those blinds. One would think it to be a funeral, not a picnic, we are going to." This was spoken by Kate, and duly laughed at by Milly as a famous joke.

The flood of sunshine which poured into the room and over the person of Caroline, when

she rose and complied with this request, seemed to reprove and almost to dissipate the gloom which had overshadowed her thoughts. Beginning partly to yield to the infection of the others' merriment, she said, gayly:

"I shall think Robert has deserted us if he does not soon return."

"What shall we do to punish him for staying out so long?" asked Milly.

"Has Robert not come in?" exclaimed Kate, who, till now, had been too busily engaged in fastening and adjusting a pair of new kid gloves to notice her brother's absence. "We must go and join the party at Mr. Ford's without him, rather than be too late. What do you say, Milly?"

"I shall not stir without Robert."

"Then it appears that I shall have to starve off by myself."

"Kate, you must never think of such a thing," remonstrated Caroline. "It would be very unbecoming; and what would William Rayburn say when he came to hear of it?"

"He would put on one of those gloomy looks of righteous indignation which always make me laugh. If it were only to annoy him I would go."

"Would it be a proper or ladylike treatment of him?" urged Caroline, seriously.

"Right or wrong, I am, at any rate, determined to get rid of him. William and I do not agree, nor care for one another in the least. He is one of those quiet plodding sort of men that would just suit you, Caroline. I am inclined to believe that he himself would prefer you if he had his choice."

Caroline felt her face flush, and remained silent on hearing this remark.

"Henry Ford will propose to you to-day if he gets the slightest chance," said Milly, addressing Kate.

"Then I sincerely hope he will," rejoined the latter, averting her face as if this was a subject on which even her feelings could be seriously stirred.

"We can easily manage that," returned Milly, "being the only engaged person in the party, I shall have all the responsibility."

"Oh, you responsible little old lady!" and their silvery laughs burst out.

"Dr. Rayburn would suit Caroline famously," continued Milly, unabashed; "and if you only give up teasing him, he will very soon come round."

"An idea strikes me!" suddenly exclaimed Kate. "The solemn doctor would be company for Caroline to-day. We can easily call for him as we are going past, and take him with us. Mr. Ford told us to be sure and bring a friend."

"Kate, Kate! you must do nothing of the sort!" again remonstrated Caroline, greatly put about by this turn of the conversation.

"Of course we shall not go. Robert will have to call and make some excuse for not inviting him before. He is sure to be at work in his dirty laboratory."

"You have forgotten all about your breakfast, I suppose?" remarked Caroline, as a diversion.

"Really, I feel too much excited just now to eat. There will be a splendid luncheon when we get to Daneleigh House. Pour out a cup of coffee for each of us, Caroline, with plenty of cream in it, so that we may not burn our mouths."

"Not any for me, thank you; I had my breakfast hours ago," said Milly, rising to depart, and adding, "As I did not say good-by, mamma will be wondering where I am."

"Milly, I want to speak to you," said Kate, rising up also, and intercepting her.

"Is it anything particular? Because I want to go across."

"Very particular," and the two girls remained by the window conversing in whispers for a few minutes, whilst Caroline, ringing for the coffee-pot, busied herself at the breakfast-table.

"Has your trousseau arrived?" was the first question asked by Kate.

"No; it will not be home till to-morrow afternoon."

"What is the material of the wedding-dress?"

"White silk, of course, trimmed with point lace and orange-blossoms."

"Where are you and Robert going to spend the honeymoon?"

"That is always a secret, you know, Kate;" and Milly flushed painfully under the keen, half-mischievous glance of her inquisitor.

"But you can tell me, can you not?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"Because I do not know myself. Robert said only after we were married he would tell me that."

"You and he will have pleasant times. Only I hope my turn will come very soon. It will be dull enough for Carry and me, I can assure you, after you are gone."

"There is a carriage coming up the street," cried Milly, glad of a diversion of any kind from the subject spoken of. "It must be Robert or some of the Fords coming to see what we have been about."

"It seems to be stopping here."

The wheels rattled loudly over the paved street, then suddenly ceased. The bell was rung violently, and the door being opened, a strange voice was heard inquiring: "Has a Mr. Robert Marsden been living here?" "Yes," was the servant girl's reply. Presently there was a shuffling of several feet along the passage, and the room door was thrown wide open. The occupants had crossed over and stood directly op-

posite to it; Caroline in the centre, and the others, in their gay finery, on each side, wondering what was going to happen next. Caroline advanced a step, and was the first to meet her brother face to face. Four strange men were along with him, pushing him forward and supporting him on either hand. His head was uncovered; his hair and beard matted and clinging about his neck. His clothes were dirty and carelessly thrown on. His face was deadly pale and his eyes stared stonily. He was a corpse.

While bathing that morning he had seized with cramp and drowned before any could rescue him. All efforts to restore animation after he was taken out had been ineffectual.

The men, in attempting to bring the body in off the narrow passage, had raised it into a nearly upright posture, but when they saw how the room was occupied, they drew back, and carried it to a bed-room up above.

Late that night the coffee cups were standing untasted; the picnic had not come off; and the three girls, one in her grey dressing-gown, and the other two in muslins and sunbonnets, were still clinging to one another, sobbing, moaning, and refusing to be comforted.—M. A. Y., in *Colburn's New Monthly*.

THE AMATEUR BALLAD SINGER.

The amateur ballad singer is, in general, a man of rather more than thirty years of age, short, stout, and rubicund. It is in this state, and after a plentiful supply of tea and muffins, that he advances to the pianoforte to sing of his blighted hopes, his withered joys, his sunken eyes, and pale and melancholy cheek.

Possessed of a most inordinate affection for the murmuring stream, the warbling bird, the sighing breeze, he ever proposes excursions upon the waters, reveries in the shady groves, kisses in the zephyr breeze. Then all at once he cries, "My poor mother! my poor cottage!" and he is in despair, and he withers away and dies, like the flower of the field, but always with that fresh and rosy face we have before mentioned. Then again, if we are to believe his song, he is but fifteen; he consults the oracle of his love, which replies to him that he will be loved to madness forever. At length the moon rises; he is content, he is happy. Page or damoisel, he goes forth to sing under the casement of noble dame or gentle maiden; he performs duos with the breeze, with the waters of the lake, with the rustling leaves; with whom or what does he not perform duos? Meanwhile, as sleep is necessary for the tranquil soul, he reposes himself under the shadow of some rose-tree, or under the white wings of some guardian angel, who watches over his repose and smiles upon his waking glance. What a happy life is that of an amateur ballad singer!—a life strewn with flowers and false notes; a happy life indeed for him, but not for others.

In imitation of comic singers and serious singers, of singers of French music and of Italian music, our hero will never sing when asked, but uninvited will "warble his wood-notes wild" by the hour together. Misfortune to you above all, if he accepts after having previously refused! for he will sit himself down to the pianoforte like a Macedonian phoenix arising from its ashes; he will be unfatigable. Then of no avail will be your expostulations, your disapproval, or your applause; you must hear him to the end, you must endure him to the last note of his inexhaustible repertoire.

This puts me in mind of a circumstance which occurred some years ago at the house of Lord —, at the time attached to our embassy at the court of France. One evening he had invited a numerous circle to a supper and a hearing of the celebrated Spanish guitar-player Huerta. As Lord —'s supper parties were always *très recherchés*, and as, besides, the reputation of the famous guitarist had preceded him to Paris, none failed at the rendez-vous, not even Huerta, who however begged it to be clearly understood that not feeling himself "in the vein," it would be utterly impossible for him to gratify the company with an exhibition of his wonderful powers that night.

The entreaties, the prayers even of the guests were of no avail; and the disappointed Amphitryon, after many new supplications had been tried in vain, was at length compelled to order supper, when — O happiness! at the moment when the dishes were on the table, at the moment when the slightest hope would have been madness, Huerta rose and seized the instrument. He played a first, a second, a third piece, each more brilliant than its predecessor; and his nerve seeming to augment as he played, his audience began to grow uneasy, for the supper was cooling in proportion as the instrument was warming under the digits of the artist.

Huerta's inspiration, so slow in coming, was still more dilatory in taking its departure; and for upward of two mortal hours did he hold his audience, pale and trembling, not at the chords of his lyre, but at the thoughts of the supper which they too well knew was cooling in the adjoining room.

Mean while, as the terrible Spaniard gave no sign of being soon fatigued, the master of the house, skillfully profiting by a sudden interruption, quickly as lightning gave the signal for a thunder of applause. Huerta was moved in more senses than one, and we wept. But the hot supper had, alas! become cold.

THE WORLD AND I.

BY NELLY MACKEY HUTCHINSON.

Whether my life be glad or no,
The Summers come, the Summers go,
The lanes grow dark with dying leaves;
Iceicles hang beneath the eaves;
The asters wither to the snow:

Thus doth the Summer end and go,
Whether my life be glad or no.

Whether my life be sad or no,
The Winters come, the Winters go.
The sunshine plays with baby leaves;
Swallows build about the eaves;
The lovely wind-flowers bend and blow:
Thus doth the Winter end and go,
Whether my life be sad or no.

Yet mother Nature gives to me
A fond and patient sympathy;
In my own heart I find the charm
To make her tender, near, and warm:
Through Summer sunshine, Winter snow,
She claps me, sad or glad or no.

MINA BRETTON.

A STORY.

Leading out of a tiny room fitted up as a library is a long narrow glass conservatory; one side of it is filled with a mass of blooming flowers, the other with simply twelve green boxes containing twelve orange trees just bursting into bloom. Standing in the room is a solitary individual—a young man about twenty-five years of age, nearly six feet high, with broad masculine shoulders. Of his face, the lower half is concealed by a short Italian beard, and the upper lighted by a pair of large grey eyes set very far apart. This human case contains the soul, heart, and mind of Frank Legget, who is now for the first time in his life gazing on the flowers in Mina Brettton's conservatory. He is fresh from Germany, laden with a letter for her from her brother. He wonders what the sister of his friend will be like. He congratulates himself that (as the man-servant has just informed him) Mrs. Brettton is out—he shall see the Mina (of whom he has heard so much) alone. "Girls never come up to a fellow's expectations," he tells himself as he stands there, half consciously, half unconsciously waiting to fall in love with her. Talk of "spontaneous affection," or "love at first sight," this sort of thing is generally predetermined on. Love is a science, that takes a certain time to learn, so if the process is not gone through after the preliminary meeting, it has taken place before it; unless, indeed, the man is of that flimsy material that any "human form divine" in the shape of a woman fails not to produce the same result. Now Frank Legget has gone through the first stage, and is all ready for action. The air is heavy with the sweet scent of lemon verbena, roses, and orange blooms. One last ray of the setting sun sends a golden glow aslant the flowers, and helps to dazzle his vision, as a quick, soft tread ascends the steps from the garden, and a tall pale form, clad in white, is at the top. Is this his ideal? He pauses not to consider whether or no—he but feels she is his fate. Scarcely does he know how he introduces himself and his letter to her—afterwards he cannot recall to his memory how they arrived at the degree of intimacy he feels they have achieved, ere Mrs. Brettton appears. Has he been there, seated opposite to Mina Brettton, ten minutes—ten hours—or ten years? He knows not! Her mother is an interruption, but not altogether an unwelcome one, for does it not depend on her whether he shall ever see his divinity again? Joy unheard of! She invites him to stay to dinner, if he has not a better engagement; she is sure "Mr. Brettton will be delighted to hear of his son George, from the lips of one who has so recently seen him." What other engagement could he possibly have? He accepts without a moment's hesitation, perfectly oblivious of the fact that Jack Lawson is waiting dinner for him at his club, by appointment. In what a maze the dinner passes! He talks of George Brettton, he interests the father with sketches of their German student life, and he watches to hear Mina's soft low laugh at some quaint tale or other. He never thinks of what he is eating. The first time that he really regains his senses since he saw Mina in the conservatory is when she and Mrs. Brettton rise and leave the room. And, as one awaking from a dream, he hears Mr. Brettton say, "Try that port, Mr. Legget; it is a great favourite with George, and I suppose friends' tastes agree in wine, as well as in other matters—here's your very good health. I am delighted to have made your acquaintance, and hope as long as you are in town you will make this house your headquarters."

Frank expresses a ready acquiescence to do as the old man proposes, and tosses off the wine with sympathetic alacrity.

When he and Mr. Brettton enter the drawing-room a quarter of an hour later he takes in the scene at a glance. Mrs. Brettton at the tea-table pouring out the tea, Mina seated on a low chair with an open book in her lap, and within a few feet of her is (a fiend in human shape) a young man about his own age. He is glad to observe that he is short and stout, with round black eyes, and short, crisp, curly black hair. He sits with his hands, which are white and fat, spread out on his knees, and his head thrown well back. This creature appears to be very intimate with

the whole family, is patted on the shoulder by Mr. Brettton with "Here you are, John," and actually talks to Mina as if she were of the same flesh and blood as other people. The "beast" has a very good tenor voice, Frank is obliged to admit, and sings remarkably well; but why should he order Mina to play his accompaniments in that off hand way, and actually take her to task for not performing some bar to his satisfaction? Frank would like to punch his head.

"Don't you sing, Mr. Legget?" inquires Mina presently; "John is monopolising all the music." Poor Frank is fain to admit he does not. "Not a tiny, tiny bit? We will forgive you if you don't sing as well as John; hasn't he a lovely voice?"

"Yes, I suppose so," answers Frank, in a low tone, looking straight into her face.

"You suppose so?" echoes Mina; "don't you know?"

"I was not listening," says Frank. "I was looking at you, and wondering how and why you stood his corrections so meekly."

"John's corrections?" returns the girl in an amazed voice; "why, I have been used to them all my life—I should feel quite lost without them."

"And without him also?" inquires Frank, hotly.

"And without him also," laughs Mina—"I have never thought of that before. Here, John, Mr. Legget wants to know if I should feel lost without you."

"Yes, Mina; did you speak to me?" And John Elliot turns away from answering Mrs. Brettton and crosses the room—very like a black bear, Frank thinks. Is it something in the expression of Frank's large eyes that causes Mina to reply (with a hot blush), "Nothing of any consequence, John. Will you come and sing another song?"

"Not to-night, Mina I think," he answers gravely. "You look warm; have I tired you with my music?" (This last remark in a tone too low for Frank to catch.)

"No, I am not tired of your music or anything—why do you ask? You are not generally of so inquiring a nature."

"Because you do not generally look as you do this evening," he replies; "I shall say good night, Mina," and he holds out his hand. Mina lays hers in it for an instant, and simply returns "Good night." Frank feels obliged to follow in his train; he too holds out his hand. "Good bye, Miss Brettton." Her eyes drop beneath his gaze; Frank feels his power—he is satisfied.

A fortnight has elapsed since Frank's first visit to the Bretttons.

He is again standing in the library alone—again waiting for Mina—but the scene is very different. It is nine o'clock in the evening, the room is brilliantly lighted, and the conservatory gay with many-coloured lamps, for it is Mina's birthday, and this is her birthday fête. During the past ten days Frank has been constantly in her society, and the intercourse has ripened his love. He has talked, walked, gardened, shopped, read poetry, fetched and carried, escorted her and her mother to tea-fights, theatres, routs, and balls; has quizzed all her female and covertly abused her male friends, and in short made himself as thoroughly, miserably happy as any young fool of his age could well do in fifteen days of love-making. The detestable John has been absent, but Frank hears he is to be of the party that evening, although, as Mina observed at luncheon, "he didn't dance."

So there Frank stands, taking a last stare in the glass at his faultless "get up," and then examining a large bouquet of red and white roses (minus paper) in a jewelled holder, his birthday offering for Mina. He hears the rustle of her dress ere she enters the room; she does not know he has arrived, and starts with a glad surprise when she perceives him. Timidly he places the bunch of roses in her hands, without a word.

"For me?" she exclaims, pressing her face down over them; "how good of you! and what a lovely holder—it is the prettiest present I have had to-day."

Frank watches her pleasure. "Do you know the language of flowers?" he asks.

"No—tell me," she entreats, looking up into his face.

"Innocent yet," thinks Frank. "I can't now," he answers, turning away into the conservatory. She follows him.

"Isn't it all pretty?" she asks.

"Yes," he replies. "If by all you mean yourself and your attire. Turn round, young lady; let's have a look at you. You have a white dress on to-night, I perceive, but it is not so pretty as that one I first saw you in, a fortnight ago—that looked like an angel's."

"And this?" she laughingly inquires.

"Is like a bride's; you only want the orange blossom. Shall I pick you a bit?"

"No, no, not for the world," exclaims Mina; "don't touch them."

"Why not? are they sacred? That reminds me, your mother told me these orange trees had a history attached to them—and I was to ask you for it. Come and tell me now; there is plenty of time before anybody comes; here is a seat; now begin."

Mina seats herself, and murmurs. "You ought to know, I suppose. If I tell you the story of my orange flowers, will you tell me the meaning of your roses?"

"Yes, I promise," answers Frank firmly. They have both turned a little paler than usual. She lays the roses by her side, clasps her hands on her knees, and with half-averted head and

cast down eyes commences (as a child would say a lesson, hurriedly and monotonously): "I was born in Sicily. It is the custom there to plant twelve orange trees the day a girl is born—the flowers to form her bridal wreath when she shall marry. We came over to England when I was five years old, and papa brought the trees he had reared with him. As a child I called them mine, and watched as year by year my bridal garland grew. I laughed and joked; and wondered when the trees would bloom, and when I should wear their blossom. And my kind cousin John teased and coaxed, petted and spoilt me, until this time last year—then, as I stood idly counting the buds upon the trees, he came and asked me to marry him. Papa and mamma both wished it, and so I said I would. I promised that this year's flowers should make my wreath—and that is all."

"All, Mina! all! You have left out one thing in your tale altogether—you have never mentioned the word love. You want to know the meaning of my roses—they mean that word love. In these days I suppose it is an exploded notion to join love and marriage together, and a girl can make her bridal wreath of orange flowers alone, and have not one rosebud in the whole wreath." Frank raises his voice as he finishes. (And they are both too much occupied to observe that John Elliot has arrived on the scene of action before the close of Mina's narrative. He stands in the library concealed from view, overhearing the conversation between his affianced wife and a man who a fortnight since was an utter stranger to her. He also has his floral offering—a huge bepapered Covent Garden affair, all colours of the rainbow. Poor fellow! it is never offered.)

"Why did you not tell me this before?" asks Frank excitedly.

"I did not know—I did not feel," Mina answers incoherently, standing up and grasping her roses tightly.

"You will keep my roses," he exclaims. "Mina, have I taught you their meaning? (grasping her hand) tell me."

"I hear some one coming; let me go," she entreats.

"One word—if you were not going to marry your cousin—would you throw away my roses?"

For answer Mina presses her lips on to the flowers, pushes them back into his hands, and says, "I give them back to you—and all my happiness goes with them; but John I ves me; and now I know what that word means; I cannot ruin his happiness to make thy own."

"And am I not to be considered at all, then?" asks Frank, sadly.

"I can't help you," she answers. "I have promised John, papa, mamma and everybody." Then suddenly, as he turns impatiently away, she cries out, "Oh, my love! my love! are you not satisfied? Don't you see my heart is breaking?" And she passes bewildered through the library, her dress almost brushing the concealed lover.

The guests arrive; stout mothers and slight daughters, sweet seventeens and girls of seven seasons; tall dark Young Englanders, with beplastered hair carefully parted down the middle of their craniums, and lilliputian specimens of every known flower carefully arranged in their button holes; fair bearded men, from the War Office, who lol at the doorways, and tumble the artificial flowers and bows that loop back the muslin curtains—men who "don't dance," and make themselves particularly disagreeable to their hostess, when she dives through the crowd in a vain effort to look up a partner for a girl unable to find one for herself. Flirtations—vases—ices—nonsense—champagne—supper—and thumb, thumb, thumb on the piano by the hired musician, with more coat sleeve and knuckle than "touch," as the cornet waxes louder and louder, and the evening progresses.

"What a jolly value!" remarks Angelina to Edwin as they pause in the dance—hot, giddy, and excited. Amongst all this moves Mina, the queen of the fête. Her crown seems to hurt her though, if one may judge by the occasional contraction of her brow. She dances the opening quadrille with John, as in duty bound; then in five minutes fills up her programme promiscuously to the very end. Frank also dances away industriously. His partners find his manners do not come up to his appearance, and "awfully slow!" is one girl's verdict to another, in after-supper confidences.

"Your birthday, Mina," observes old Mr. Lucas, "and no one brought you any flowers! What have you young cavaliers been thinking about! Here, John—Mr. Legget—how came you to be so neglectful? I would have provided my niece with some myself, but I thought she would be overwhelmed with bouquets." (Are there not two withered bunches lying neglected at the foot of the conservatory steps? Yet both the young men look as guilty as if she accusation was true.)

At half-past three it is over—the last "Good night" is wished—the last carriage rolls away, and Mr. and Mrs. Brettton, Mina, Frank and John, stand alone together in the deserted drawing-room. "Well, it all went off capitally," observed Mrs. Brettton with hospitable pride. "But I don't think Tompkins's jellies were quite as clear as usual. Come, young people, it is time to think of bed. You all three look woefully tired—not a touch of colour in the cheeks of the whole of you. You must show John your presents to-morrow morning, Mina."

"Yes, mamma," answers Mina wearily. And she rises to say "Good night." "Stay a moment, Mina," says John, "I have not given you my present yet—will you come into the library with me?" Mina silently acquiesces, and passes from the room with him.

"We'll go to bed, my dear, if you have no objection," remarks Mr. Brettton cheerfully—"and see the present in the morning. No use waiting up; lovers keep no count of time; they may be half an hour. Ha, ha, ha! Take my advice, Frank, and follow our example." Frank mutters incoherently something about having a smoke before he turns in; and as Mr. and Mrs. Brettton leave the room, throws himself upon the sofa and buries his head in the cushion. John leads the way, followed by Mina, silently along the passage, through the library, and into the conservatory. With two or three exceptions the coloured lamps are all burnt out, and the orange flowers are dimly seen, like shadowy white flakes, resting on their shiny leaves.

He takes her hands and places her on the seat she has occupied once before that evening, when Frank was her companion. (She notes the coincidence.)

"I have brought you here, Mina, to give you a birthday gift; but before I do so I want you to listen to something. A great, awkward, stupid fellow was foolish enough to fancy that he could make his cousin happy if she married him. He thought his love would smooth the pathway of her life, and shield her from all harm. He gained her parents' consent to woo her, and in the end she promised to be his. And then—then another fellow came and stole her heart away. But still she remained loyal to her cousin, and thought—poor child!—he would accept her sacrifice. One evening he overheard a conversation between her and the other man. Not much of it, but yet enough to show—"

But Mina starts up and interrupts him, "Enough, John, enough. Do not be so cruel."

"Cruel, child!" he replies calmly. "I shall never be cruel any more. My birthday present to you is—your freedom."

Mina stands before him with dilated eyes, and gasps out, "You are not teasing me, John? Do you mean it? Is it true? true that I am free?"

"Yes, Mina, it is true." He presses his lips upon her forehead calmly, almost coldly, stern resolve in every movement.

"And you?" she murmurs inquiringly.

"Never mind me," he answers, as he stoops to pick a tiny sprig of orange blossom, and turns away—a smile so sad upon his face that Mina puts her hands up to her eyes to shut it out.

He meets Frank in the hall, and quietly says, "Mina wants you in the library." Then takes his hat down from the hat-stand, opens the front door, and steps out into the cold pale morning light—the scent of the orange blossom in his hand the transient memorial of his happiness.

THE CAVES OF ADELSBERG.

[From *Belgravia*.]

ANT. These be lies.
MEN. Ay, that they be, and truth;
For truth, like woman, must be clothed with lies,
Lest foolish man lack sympathy.

Titus Andron., act ii, scene 4.

I think, when beginning to write about something in which one feels great interest, it is best not to go straight at the subject at once, but for a time to wander about a little, that one may get a better idea of its position, and so be able to come down on it with a swoop, like a hawk after its circlings in the air. So I shall start from Vienna, and trust to Providence and luck to carry me on to Adelsberg.

It appears—but of this I cannot be sure—that at Vienna some strange distinction, which I cannot understand, is made between the trains of *grande vitesse* and *petite vitesse*. My reason for saying this appears so is the following:

We, A. and B., booked our luggage at Vienna for Adelsberg, received the usual tickets—after the usual delay—and saw our beloved portmanteaus labelled "Adelsberg."

We started with the train.

"Didn't see the luggage put in," said A.

"Nor I," said B. "We must ask."

So we asked. And we looked, and the luggage was not there. We telegraphed from the next station, and at Adelsberg received an answer.

The luggage had been sent on by a later train to Nadesrina.

"Can't be right," said A. suspiciously, "You've made a mistake in translating. Why sent on to Nadesrina?"

"I haven't the slightest idea," replied B. "This fellow says it's because our train was *grande vitesse*, and the next *petite vitesse*."

And this is why I fancy there is some strange distinction between the trains of *grande vitesse* and *petite vitesse* which start from Vienna.

It was past eight P.M. when we got to Adelsberg, very dark, very cold, and most drizzlingly wet. There was no carriage, no omnibus, at the station, and not one house to be seen outside.

"Can't go on without the luggage," said A. "How can we enjoy the caves after this?"

"Not a bit," murmured B.

A German man, and a German woman with a bag, had got out of the train with us. They went to the waiting room, we having been informed that the omnibus would come soon. They spent the intermediate time in taking out of the bag bread, which they ate, and a bottle of wine from which they drank.

At last the omnibus came. It appeared to our insular gaze to be a broken-down brougham; and great care seemed to have been taken in

making it, that it should be extremely heavy and extremely clumsy. In it we started for the hotel—German man, German woman, bag, and all.

"Do you think you could ask that fellow how far to go?" said A.

"I'm not quite sure," returned B. "I believe I can, but I must think first."

So B. began thinking; but before he had finished and the question had been evolved, we stopped at the hotel.

I wonder what reason there can be for the invariable rule throughout France and Germany, that the more desolate, empty, and barn-like a hotel is the larger is the yard. In the present case the yard was simply enormous; and the hotel of course—with the one exception of the landlady's hair, which was a perfect marvel of coils and plaits and frizzes and oil—enormously desolate, empty, and barnlike, gave one the idea of the skeleton of a palace fleshed with the fleshing of a pigsty.

The landlady spoke Italian. A. and B. confessed their ignorance of that language.

"German?"

"Ya, ya," said A. pointing to B. "You speak it, man. Go in. Don't be afraid."

So B. essayed to understand a long animated German sentence given forth by the landlady, which, luckily for him, ended, as most German speeches addressed to Englishmen do end, with certain words of English—"Bets? De caves? Eat?"

"She wants to know," said B. unable to repress a smile of pleasure at his command over the German language—"she wants to know whether we wish to sleep here, and if we have come with an intention of seeing the caves. She would also be glad to know if we will have dinner."

"I could have told that," said A. "When did she say we are to see the caves—now, or in the morning?"

"I think now," replied B. doubtfully; but we had better not ask too many questions at once."

A. smiles grimly, and we go to dinner. The rain was falling in a feeble half-hearted way when we started in the omnibus for the caves, and the night was pitch dark. We went up hill and down dale for some fifteen minutes, but always over rough broken stones. I had a vague feeling that the road we were going was on the edge of a precipice, but I don't know, even to this day, whether the feeling was correct or not. At last we stopped. The rain was still falling feebly, and it was still very dark. We could see that we had stopped close by a high bank or rock, and dimly perceived an opening into it. The driver got down, and for a minute we were left alone.

The German man here began a quick address to us, and when he had finished his wife began a second quick address.

They smiled and nodded their heads assuringly, and at last the German man, by a divine inspiration, brought out the words "All right."

"Ya, ya," cried his wife. "All right, ya, all right," and she smiled on us.

"What are they saying?" asked A.

"They are telling us," replied B., wildly clatching at the words "all right," "that we must not be frightened, and we shall find everything all—proper at last."

Here, through the outside darkness, we began to see men passing along the face of the rock, carrying lighted candles stuck on to long pieces of wood, the flames throwing strange blotches of light around, bleared by the falling rain; and at last we saw, far away through the opening in the rock, a glimmer of brightness, and then our guide returned and told us to get down. Down we got, walked half a dozen steps, and entered the opening in the rock, the entrance to the caves of Adelsberg.

The German man had brought with him the bag, the German woman a formidable square bottle. Of all the misfortunes of my life that I regret, I most regret the misfortune of not having been able to be for a longer time with those two. I want to know how they would have looked without the bag. I want to know whether they would have starved if deprived of food and drink for sixty minutes. While we were with them they were always eating or drinking. Even in the omnibus the square bottle was uncorked, and they both went at it; and we hadn't been five minutes in the caves before they were cutting up an enormous sausage, and making, with buttered bread, enormous sandwiches.

The entrance to the caves is a natural opening in the rock, of height perhaps twenty or thirty feet, of width twenty, and running straight in for two or three hundred yards. Following the guide, we walked on towards the glimmer of light we had seen, and soon came upon six men holding lighted candles, and standing by a wheeled double chair, running on rails laid down in the cave. The German woman seated herself on the chair, candles were given us, lighted, and away we went. We walked some distance, almost a mile, along a large passage. The ground was wet, water standing in pools in many places. The sides and top were wet, water dripping down continually; and the rock, above and below, was brown and shining and oily-looking.

"Sehr habsch," said the German woman, placidly eating her sandwich.

"What did she say?" asked A.

"That is very pretty," replied B. who was falling each moment into a wilder state of astonishment at his knowledge of the German language. "Sehr" is 'very,' and 'habsch' 'pretty.'"

"Did she mean the cave or the sandwich?" asked A. sardonically.

"I can't say, replied B. "She was looking at the sandwich, but she wouldn't call a sandwich pretty, would she?"

"Quite as likely as to call this pretty, especially when she eats as she does. I shall read Murray, and see what he says."

"By Jove!" cried A. after a minute's perusal of the book, "we're going right into the rock, and we shall come to a place one hundred and sixty feet high directly, a mile from the entrance, with a river running through it, and a bridge—look out?"

"Herr Murray?" said the guide, touching the book, and looking knowingly at A. "All Englishmen bring him. Read him. Very good."

Again there was a glimmer of light ahead, broken pieces of light in the passage, and suddenly sides and top fell back, and we stood in the first cave of Adelsberg.

How shall I describe what we then saw! The wonder is still on me. The German man and the German woman ceased for an instant even from eating, that they might the better look at A. stared with big eyes, and freed himself from his burden of wonder by an emphatic "damn;" while B. tried vainly to drown his amazement in tears.

We stood at the side of an enormous cavern, one mile from the place we had entered at, hundreds of feet below the surface of the earth. Fifty or sixty candles had been placed about, but the huge cavern was only dimly lighted, and black masses of shadow were left in its corners untouched. Above, the broken rocky roof rose sheer away, till one hundred and sixty feet from the ground; below again a broken rocky floor, and a river running, swiftly along, breaking the stillness with its clatter and splash. In front of us the floor rose gradually, till lost in shadow; but we could see a bridge crossing the river, which there ran far below in the bed it had cut through the rocks. The place was infinitely vast, infinitely solemn; and yet there was a strange mockery in it. The river alone made any sound, flowing on always. Down far below the surface of the earth, far away from men and their homes, it seemed to laugh at us and our powerlessness and ignorance. For ages and ages it had flowed, resistless in its insidious gentleness, eating its course through the soft earth and hard rock, now out in the sunlight watching the vain lives of men, and again in the darkness laughing over its experience, glorying in its immunity from mankind's hopes and fears.

"Sehr habsch," said the German woman; and with a sigh she took from the bag two pieces of buttered bread and one piece of sausage, and amalgamated them into a sandwich.

"There she goes again," said A. with a look of disgust. "She must be a confoundingly expensive woman for a wife. I can't stand it; let's try and get away from them."

But, try as we would, they kept close to us, and for the three hours we were underground we never lost sight of them and their square bottle and sandwiches.

At last, when familiarity had somewhat weakened our spell of wonder, we went on slowly up the broken rocky ground of the cave, wet with the perpetual dripping of water, and crossed the bridge high above the river. Suddenly there was a crash that echoed sharply, and then again only the sound of the river. The guide made a voluble speech to the Germans, and they instantly, hugging the square bottle and bag affectionately, hurried away over the bridge; then turning to us, he said smilingly: "Rock fall. See, very near. Many fall sometimes. Kill once man. We go other cave. That one much finer."

Over the bridge we went, up the broken rocky ground, till we came to the limit of the huge cave, and found a low narrow exit, down which we could see the German man and his wife cautiously proceeding, their candles throwing strange shadows and lights in the darkness.

"Sehr wonderful, next cave," said the guide, always speaking with an air of pity for our ignorance of German, balanced, however, with an assuring nod that spoke as clearly as Lord Purleigh's, and said, "No matter. You are stupid. Never mind. I can make you understand."

Before again starting I turned back alone to look at the cave we were leaving. Two men we had not before noticed were busily engaged in blowing out the candles, and putting them away in little boxes they held. The shadows had grown blacker, and grew blacker and heavier each moment as the light decreased. I could see nothing above; all was lost in shadow, thick, impenetrable. I could not trace the sides but here and there, where a candle threw a tiny broken circle of light. The river I could hear and trace with my eyes, flowing on like ink, catching now and again a spark of brightness. The shadows grew blacker and heavier, and I turned away with relief and entered the little passage down which the others had gone.

This passage was small and low, and I noticed, as I hurried along, that there was a complete change in the character of the rocks. Above, below, and on all sides, as ever, there was damp moisture, water falling and standing in pools and dripping continually; but the rocks had lost their blackness, and were now white and yellow. Stalactites depended here and there, and now and again a stalagmite stood upright.

When I got up to the others, the German woman was peacefully slumbering on the double chair, as she was slowly pushed forward, folding to her bosom the square bottle; and now and then she would murmur dreamily, with her eyes fast shut, "Sehr habsch," and her husband, trudging by her side with the bag, invariably replied, "Ya, ya; sehr habsch."

"Couldn't you manage to bribe some of these fellows to go forward and take out one of the rails?" said A. to B. in a whisper. "We must get rid of those two somehow. How the deuce can we get up any sentiment about the place with them near us? Do try, there's a good fellow."

"I'm afraid, really I don't know enough German for that," replied B. in a voice of assumed sadness. "It would require a knowledge, you see, of engineering and—"

"Not a bit, my dear fellow, said A. "Haven't the slightest doubt these fellows were in the war, and—"

"New cave, very new," broke in the guide at this moment. "Herr Murray say him best."

Twist went the passage to the left, back again to the right, then the sides and the top fell back, and we stood in second cave.

If the caves of Adelsberg were developed by pure chance or by certain fixed laws, which comes to much the same thing, this same chance or these fixed laws must be excellently well up in the knowledge of theatrical effect. The first cave was sombre, vast; it overwhelmed you with a vague sense of mystery and age. The second, that we now stood in, lighted simply, as the other, with some fifty candles, glittered from side to side, from top to bottom, in great masses of shining white and yellow and brown, in smaller lights touching sharply here and there of bright red and blue and green; the whole place was light, airy, fantastic. Stalactites of every form and every size and color hung, covering completely, in their myriads, the far-spreading roof; here depending straight to the ground, and joining with an ascending stalagmite into a mighty column; there facing ten or twenty together, forming the most delicate tracery; again joining and parting and crossing till they made a vast labyrinth of sinuous forms. Stalagmites of every shape and every size and color rose up numberless from the ground, and now approaching, now joining, the stalactites from above, helped to perfect the strangeness and wild fantasy of the place. The cave was enormous in size, but its size was not oppressive: shadows sat in places, but they were thinned and terrorless in the airy brightness.

"Like reading 'Don Juan' after 'Paradise Lost,'" said A. sentimentally. "Let's see what Murray says."

Soon after entering the cave, to our intense relief, the German man and German woman, with their square bottle and sausage sandwiches, left us for a time. It is true they were not out of sight, but to have the square bottle fifty yards away was a great thing. It appears that some barbarously ingenious person or persons have discovered likenesses in the various stalactites and stalagmites to various material objects on the surface of the earth, and the guide, approving, is accustomed to declare these likenesses to all entering the caves.

We had not been in one minute before he began. A thin transparent rib, formed by the dripping moisture, stood out from the side; the light of a candle shone brightly through it, showing most glorious shades of red and blue and green.

"Dese," said the guide, his eyes sparkling with delight—"dese is a comm."

"A what?" asked A.

"A comm," replied our guide, with an assuring nod. "O yes, dese is a comm."

"I think," said B. looking doubtfully at the guide, "I think he means it is a comb."

"Ya, ya, dat is so. A comm, ya. And dese." And here he passed on to another place. "And dese."

"A comb!" cried A. with a look of disgust. "I suppose he'll go through all the things. The next will be a brush, of course, and then—Let's go to the other side; I can't stand it."

But the German man and the German woman were in a wild state of delight at this new discovery. They stuck closely to the guide, carried him by force to every strange form they could find, and asked him eagerly, "Was ist das?" Organs, teapots, lions, monkeys, waterfalls, and elephants they found in vast numbers, and at last we rejoined them, staring in fixed admiration at a strange lump of stalagmite.

"Dese," said the guide to us, with a smile of pity for our bad taste in not having accompanied him the whole way—"dese is a leg of bacon."

"Ya, ya," said the German and his wife sadly, guessing instinctively what had been said; "es ist;" and they gazed on it in fond regret, as a starving gourmand in the desert would stare on a petrified sweetbread if he chanced to find one.

This miserable delight in discovering in indefinite forms of beauty definite likenesses to material objects of ordinary life is, I fear, common to nearly all people of all nations. At this present time I can think of only two individuals who are free from it—myself and you, most loved reader. How often have we been looking at some glorious sunset, and been suddenly roused from placid contemplation by the discovery of a friend that "that cloud by the sun, the red one, you know, tinged with gold, looks just like a lobster, doesn't it?"—at a glorious open English fire, and been saddened by the ingenuity of a friend who peoples it with arms and legs and faces and crocodiles? How often have we sat in ecstasy listening to Beethoven and Mozart, and been suddenly tumbled back into common-place life by a whispered communication that "The dark girl dressed in Blue" begins just like this, old man?" Let us, most loved reader, drink confusion to this confounded definiteness. What must become of poetry and sentiment if the world goes on much longer in

its present course? Even now, how can one write to one's mistress, and compare her to the rising sun or full moon, when the sun and moon are no longer unknown mysterious sources of light, life, and madness, but mere lumps of matter, whose compositions we know as well as that of our own Odger-and-Salisbury-inhabited planet?

"By Jove, listen to this, B.," cried A., his eyes fixed on Murray. "It says that 'the extreme antiquity of these enormous caverns may be, in some slight degree, imagined from the results of an empirical experiment which determined conclusively that the water—containing lime and other ingredients in solution—formed no perceptible deposit in thirty years, while one vast column in the second of these caves is sixty feet in height and forty in circumference.' By Jove! where is the column! That must be it; let's measure."

So A., with his stick, measured the column, and found it the size Murray had said.

"It must have taken," said A., looking in thoughtful wonder at the column, "a thousand years, at least, to grow that size."

"I should have fancied, myself," murmured B., doubtfully, "it would have taken longer than that."

"It must have taken," said A., after a pause, during which he and B. continued to stare at the column, "a million years, at least, to grow that size."

"I should have fancied, myself, it would have taken longer than that," said B., less doubtfully.

"By Jove," said A., after a long pause, and in sheer desperation, "no fellow can tell how long it must have taken—billions and billions of years. I wonder whether Murray believes in the Old Testament?"

We stood looking, I know not how long, at this timeless form. At last B. broke out wildly.

"I must get away, A., right away; I can't stand it. Fancy this place being all quiet for I don't know how long; and this thing growing about the size of a sugar-plum bigger every thirty years, and now being so big! It's awful; I can't stand it."

"I should like," said A. sentimentally, as we walked away, "to know whether Murray believes in the Old Testament."

Often before I saw that cave I have dreamt at night that I have fallen from my bed, and started a wild descent through eternal space. The feeling was awful; eternity oppressed me. But standing before that pillar, trying to realize its immense age, the oppression of feeling was far worse.

"Shan't look at that again," said A. "Horrid feeling, thinking of it. Seems as if all the laws of gravity were wrong, and there was no top or bottom or side to anything."

After the discovery of the leg of bacon, the curiosity of the German man and woman began to abate; and the guide himself, I fancy, got somewhat tired of answering their numerous questions, for he commenced to trade widely on their belief—the next thing they referred to being, he declared, a giraffe; and the next, he affirmed with a pretty calm face to be a ghost. The suspicions of the Germans, that he was not strictly telling the truth, seemed to be aroused by this, for they asked him no more questions; but after another look of admiration at the leg of bacon, came with us out of the cave.

"How many more are there?" said A., as we entered another passage, now low and narrow, now high and wide, but always clothed with white stalactites and stalagmites.

"More? Many more. Very. Come big cave where people dance. Other cave, where concert-room. Come other waterfall," replied the guide, smiling and nodding his head.

In all, we were three full hours wandering in these caverns. At some point—where, I now forget—the rail laid down ended, and the German woman had to leave her chair and walk. She fell in most cheerfully with the necessity, and taking her husband's arm, stumbled along sleepily, with fast closed eyes, and trusting implicitly to his guidance. Now and again he would murmur, "Sehr habsch;" and she, trying hard, but unsuccessfully, to open her eyes, would dutifully echo, "Sehr habsch." It was at the farthest point we reached that they mournfully ate the last of the sausage, and emptied the square bottle; and then the German, after an address to the guide, placed the said bottle in the very extremity of the cave, and carefully pressed down into it the cork. The guide smiled, and pointing to the German, turned to us and said:

"He very funny man. He make feon for all who come here. Dey tink dese spirits, but dere is none. Eh?" And he and the German went into a roar of laughter, which the echoes took up and broke hideously.

"Horrible," said A., turning away. "Can't he be content with eating sandwiches? Ought to be kicked for making such a vile pun."

How many caverns we saw, I know not. There was the dance-room, as our guide called it—a huge place, with a smooth floor of sand and long wooden benches here and there; about the last sort of place one would expect to find there. Then there was the concert-room, so called from a strange mass of long stalactites and stalagmites at one end that looked curiously like an organ. There was the waterfall, formed by the moisture falling over a smooth rock—"though some tinks it more like umbrella?" said the guide interrogatively.

At last, tired out with our underground wanderings, and sleepy with such unwonted exercise of our sense of wonder, we turned back.

A VIGIL.

Dark shore, and desolate sky
Unquickened by a star;
Sad sea where wandering sails are lost
In night afar!

No human presence sweet,
Nor other sound beside,
Save that to silence near akin—
The ebbing tide

Only a lonely wreck
High on the lonely beach,
Whose hopelessness defies at last
The breaker's reach.

O Earth that keeps no watch,
O Heaven that lights no star,
He is who cares for every sail,
Each broken spar!

BELLING THE CAT.

Valentine Hardy, *et. twenty-four*, might be considered a favorite of fortune; he had a good appearance; a nice little income paid him by a grateful nation for six hours' attendance daily in the Wafer Department of Somerset House; was supplemented by an almost equal amount accruing from private property, and he had married the object of his heart's adoration, one of the prettiest girls in all England, to wit, Felicia Hope; but (that plaguy conjunction generally steps in as an ally)—but Felicia's mother had permanently taken up her abode in the neat little house at Bayswater which Val had provided for his living treasure.

Felicia was the only offspring of her mother's union with the late Colonel Hope, of the Bombay No. 1., and had left India but a year when mischievous Cupid threw her in the way of Val Hardy. They met, they loved; he proposed, and she accepted him. It was quite a love match: Val's income was not sufficient to make it worth the while of a dashing brunette to wed him solely for that; and, on the other hand, Mrs. Hope had but just enough to maintain her position in the world.

Felicia's mamma was still in what some persons term the prime of womanhood; she was not vain enough to think she could pass for her daughter's elder sister, but few would have taken her to have reached the age of forty-two. Her husband twenty-two years previously had fallen in love with her tender brown eyes and rose-tinted cheeks; even now the eyes had not lost their old expression; and though the hot Indian sun had driven away the former fresh healthy look, leaving in its place a tint more subdued in tone, Mrs. Hope was still a very attractive woman. Grizzled colonels and tanned majors who knew her amiability, womanly sympathy, and devotion to their deceased comrade, had more than once hinted that the matrimonial market was still open to her; and jealousy and heart-burning had reigned in the little settlement of Borriogboolah Gha, up the country, ere the Colonel's widow and her only child resolved to return to England. But Mrs. Hope smiled sadly and shook her head; she was deaf to all flattery; the citadel of her love was impregnable, and her future now was bound up in the happiness of her child. At one time—soon after the Colonel and his wife arrived out, when her spirits were less buoyant than they had been of late years—there was a rumor that, had her wishes been consulted, she would far rather have been the spouse of a certain civilian in England than have journeyed to India the bride of Colonel Hope. This, however, was only a rumor, born no one knew where or how; and when her new acquaintances witnessed her assiduity to her husband, and saw the color returning to her cheeks, the rumor died away in the obscurity in which it had arisen; certainly it had never reached the ears of Felicia.

The day Val Hardy sought the consent of Mrs. Hope to the marriage was probably one of the most miserable the trio had ever spent. Val (who really was a soft-hearted fellow, despite his burly form and thick moustache), when he witnessed the emotion of his future mother-in-law, considered himself one of the most despicable creatures in the world. Mrs. Hope amid her tears told him of the yearning love with which she had watched the growth of her offspring from infancy to childhood, and thence to blushing blooming womanhood, and how she had hoped they might have spent many future years together; at which the young lover felt his own eyes moistening, and stammered forth the suggestion, that though Felicia was about to become his wife, the mother and daughter might still remain undivided. Mrs. Hope shook her head; henceforth, she said, Felicia's first care must be for her husband, as hers had been twenty-two years before—that for him she should sacrifice the home and friends of her youth, existing, trusting only in his love; the struggle of separation would be great, but she must nerve herself as she had done for former trials, and—and—But here Mrs. Hope fairly broke down, and could say no more.

Now, under these circumstances, Val's sympathetic nature could not do less than repeat that the desire to separate Felicia from the tender guardian of her youth was farthest from him; he trusted—nay, would take it as a spe-

cial favor, if Mrs. Hope would take up her abode with them. He called upon Felicia to aid him in his pleading. The young people knelt before the distressed matron, whose face was buried in the sofa pillows; and the result of this little episode was, that when Val took his leave at night, it was a thoroughly understood thing that Mrs. Hope was to merge her home into that of her daughter.

Val's relatives were few, and were scattered over various parts of the world; so he confided—for a young lover must disclose his hopes and fears to some one—many of the aspirations of his heart to a certain Herbert Price, who chanced to belong to the same social club which Valentine in his early manhood had been induced to join. Price was many years his friend's senior,—indeed, he confessed he was over forty,—and though their occupations were dissimilar, Price being a contributor of "leaders" and "reviews" to a newspaper, and having to work hard for a limited amount of pay, a certain sympathy, speedily ripening into friendship, sprang up between them. The journalist was a bachelor, living in musty chambers in a street off the Strand, and Val knew nothing of his early career, friends, or connections; but whenever the young fellow was in any strait, he always found Price able to put him in the right road to extricate himself. Price was not a clever man; but he had met with many disappointments and difficulties on his way through life, and had thereby gained an experience and worldly knowledge not to be attained by those curled darlings whose path through the world lies smooth and inviting. Herbert Price had trodden many rough pebbles in his time, and had still a recollection of their unpleasantness. To him, therefore, one evening in the smoking-room of the London Wanderers, Val communicated the fact that he was about to be married, and that his betrothed's mother would take up her abode with him; to which responded Price, shaking the ashes from his briar-root and refilling:

"It'll never do; you'll find all sorts of little things at present undreamt of crop up to disturb your happiness. Of course, it makes a difference the lady being your wife's mother, and not your own; but take my advice, and provide for the old lady in some other way."

"But she isn't an old lady; she's a robust active woman, fond of taking a leading part in all that may be going on, and thoroughly devoted to us both."

"That's where the mischief lies: she'll be so anxious for your interests that she won't let either of you have a moment's peace. However, I don't want to supply a wet blanket for any of your plans, which have doubtless been well considered. I have given you my advice; so now suppose we change the subject."

With that the sage took up the evening paper, and turned the conversation; but Val was silent and self-absorbed, and soon after departed to his own lodging, feeling not quite so well satisfied with the wisdom of the little arrangement respecting Mrs. Hope's domicile as he had been when he set out.

Later on, however, when he reached the abode of his betrothed, and was greeted by his prospective mother-in-law's beaming smile, when he observed the solicitous care and maternal pride with which she regarded Felicia, Valentine Hardy, good fellow as he was, had not the heart to communicate his fears. Perhaps, after all, Price's opinion was not worth having; and even were it a fact that young wives were, in the conduct of their new households, as a rule best left to themselves, his Felicia was different from the ordinary run of women. O sweet glamour of love, that so effectually hides from us the imperfections of the one being dearest to our heart! So Val Hardy, despite sundry disagreeable inward promptings, remained faithful to the plan he had himself proposed, threw up the society of the London Wanderers, got married, and, on the expiry of the honeymoon, brought Felicia to their new home in Minerva-terrace, finding everything prepared for their reception, and Mrs. Hope thoroughly installed.

The position Mrs. Hope had assumed she firmly maintained. Solely to save the young people trouble, she had taken upon herself the entire arrangement of the furniture; she had been engaged in wordy contests with the landlord relative to sundry details of white-washing, paper-hanging, and painting, and, of course, had carried her every point. The servants were of her own engaging; she had decided upon the butcher, baker, and milk-man of the neighborhood to be patronised; a gardener had been spoken to relative to periodical visits to the small space of ground in the rear of the house, and had already planted the flowers Mrs. Hope thought most suitable; in short, all Felicia and Val had to do was to return to be welcomed by their happy and now all powerful mamma. Mrs. Hope kept the keys; Mrs. Hope ordered and dispensed everything; in point of fact, Mrs. Hope was mistress of all she surveyed.

Now, for a time, this was pleasant enough. The doting young husband had no thought of any thing or any one but his Felicia, and did not want to be bothered with household details, whilst his beautiful spouse regarded her mamma's efforts with every token of thankfulness. But by and by came change. The fervid sunny days of summer yielded to the chills of winter; the opera season was at an end; there were no pleasant walks of an evening in by-paths of Kensington-gardens; the flower-shows were over, and it was cheerful after tea to sit by the warm fire-side and enjoy the comforts of home. At this period was it that Felicia began to realise she was little more than a visitor in her own pleasant palace, whilst Val suddenly

made the discovery that the real director of the household was his mother-in-law. The young couple would not at first acknowledge the mistake they had committed; but on one special occasion, after Mrs. Hope had had a particularly fatiguing day of it, and had scurried the servants from room to room until symptoms of rebellion became apparent in the lower regions of the house, Val ventured to hint to his wife that he thought it would be all the better if she took a more active part in the domestic arrangements; at which Felicia burst into tears, and admitted that she felt disappointed at not being allowed herself to hold the reins of government. What was to be done? Mamma was so kind and considerate in relieving her of all worry and harass, and, then again, mamma managed the servants so well. Both husband and wife readily admitted that all Mrs. Hope's services were like those performed by the celebrated Mrs. Gargery, solely out of "that goodness of her heart;" still the state of affairs was not satisfactory. Weeks passed on, and the situation remained unaltered. Once, indeed, Val had, at breakfast-time, timidly hinted that he thought it a shame so much responsibility should be thrown upon Mrs. Hope; but she would not let him finish his sentence. A tear rose to her soft brown eyes, and placing her hand upon his, she murmured: "No, dear Valentine, do not think I feel any weight of care or responsibility. It was by your wish I came into this house, and the thought of living with my child after she became another's has made me inexpressibly happy. For years past, I looked forward with dread to the day when her hand would be sought in marriage, and when my eyes would cease to be gladdened by her presence but at occasional and perhaps long intervals. You, Valentine, dissipated my fears: she is still my child, and though I have resigned her to your care, she is no more a stranger to me than when she rested upon my bosom. All I do in this house is a pleasure to me. I feel I am working for those I love, and I do my utmost to relieve them of all vexatious care."

At this, kind-hearted Val and his wife protested that any idea of separation from their dear mother was farthest from their thoughts. Mrs. Hope's little speech was, however, not yet at an end: when her children would allow, she resumed (her voice now somewhat tremulous): "If I thought either of you wished me gone, I would not vex you with my presence an hour longer. Deny me the privilege of working for you, and I am miserable; let me go on easing your cares, and I have attained the extent of my desires. Ah, now, silly ones, tell me you were only laughing at your poor old mother."

She rose from the table, and clasping her daughter (now, of course, in tears) in her arms, gazed wistfully into Valentine's face. The young husband felt a guilty flush rise to his cheek, but he had not the courage to tell her the truth. Apparently satisfied, the blooming widow resumed her seat, looking once more as bright, fresh, and beautiful as a summer landscape lit by the rays of the morning sun.

"She's a splendid creature," said Valentine to himself, as he set forth upon his official duties. "By Jove, if I was not the husband of the daughter, I'd wed the mother."

The same afternoon, by mere accident, Val met his old acquaintance, Herbert Price. Since the evening the latter had given the young lover his memorable advice, they had not seen each other. Price was too much a man of the world to feel any pique at failing to receive from his club crony any intimation of the change in his life; so when Hardy offered him his hand, they were as great chums again as though they had parted but the day before.

"Well, old man," said Valentine, "it's all come about just as you said. The mother's a good soul, but an awful bore. Won't let my wife do a single thing, and treats me as though I were a pet spaniel of a scarce breed. She's so deuced kind and considerate, and of such an amiable disposition, that you can't quarrel with her."

"Just the most awkward kind of mother-in-law to deal with."

"Exactly. If she was a violent cantankerous old woman, I might give her a bit of my mind; whereas now, whenever I attempt to hint that it would be quite as well if my wife took the management of the house into her own hands, I feel as though I were an accomplished poisoner, just about to give my victim the finishing dose."

"I see your position," remarked Price, "and it reminds me of the old fable of the mice and the cat."

"What fable is that?"

"Listen. Once upon a time there was a colony of mice, whose eager desire it was to make a safe raid upon a certain heap of corn. In the same barn, however, dwelt a particularly watchful cat, and when sundry of the rasher mice ventured to disport themselves upon the coveted grain, fearful was the havoc made in their ranks. Council after council was held, and at length it was determined that something should be done in order that token might be given of the cat's approach. A brilliant idea then struck a spruce young mouse, and springing upon his hind legs, he said: "What if a bell were put around the wily creature's neck?" For a brief space the novelty of the scheme struck the council with admiration. Then rose a gray grizzled mouse, practical and experienced from the end of his whiskers to the tip of his tail, and gravely said: "What my young friend has suggested is most creditable to his inventive faculties, but *who's to bell the cat!*"

"By Jove, you've hit it, old man. Come down and see our cat—I mean my mother-in-law—

and judge for yourself the extreme difficulty of my position. Return with me this evening."

"No, no," pleaded Price; "I'm a bashful old fellow, and unused to the society of ladies."

"I won't take a denial. Call for me at the Wafer Department at a quarter to four. We can have a cosy chat this evening, and wind up with a friendly rubber."

Herbert Price hesitated, and was lost. He liked Valentine Hardy better than any of his casual acquaintances, and at length was induced to promise that he would accompany him to Bayswater. The journalist shunned and affected to despise female society; but beneath his somewhat rough exterior and bluntness of speech, there was a chord which vibrated with wondrous resonance whenever the sound of a certain name rang in his ear, and awoke sad painful memories—memories of days long departed, when the future had seemed tinged with the most roseate hues of promise.

When Val rushed off to resume his duties, Herbert Price wished in his heart that he had not that afternoon met his young friend; but he had given his word that he would spend the evening with him, and accordingly, at the time appointed, they mounted the box-seat of an omnibus, and were soon rattling along the busy thoroughfares. Before the young husband had concluded extolling the virtues of his wife, they had arrived at Minerva-terrace, and in a few minutes Price was in the presence of the winsome little woman who had so completely enslaved Valentine's affections. Mamma, it appeared, had gone to the West-end, to fulfil the great feminine duty of "shopping," and having several calls to make, was not expected home until seven o'clock. The mere announcement that Herbert Price had been for many years a faithful friend of her husband's, was enough to insure, for him a hearty welcome from Felicia. The gray-haired cynic, won by her bright smiles and simple grace, soon recovered his self-possession, and ere an hour had passed began to reflect that after all, perhaps, his experience of woman-kind had not been sufficient to warrant the outbursts of spleen in which he had so often indulged respecting the sex.

"Val Hardy, you are a lucky man," he said, when after tea the two men strolled into the garden.

Minerva-terrace had been built when land at Bayswater was less valuable than now, and the taste of Mrs. Hope, combined with the skill of the gardener, had done much for the little space at their disposal. A pond of about the capacity of a good-sized washing-tub had been constructed in the centre, and in it some half-dozen fat sleepy goldfish swam, whilst at the extreme end was a summer-house ingeniously surrounded by rockery, over which trailed stonecrop, ferns, and creeping plants. This summer-house was, in the eyes of Felicia and her husband, a perfect little Paradise; here, on summer afternoons, when Val was in town, the young wife would stray, her thoughts busy with her husband, whilst her fingers were employed in embroidery or some other feminine knack. The place was a trifle damper than such resorts usually are, and the snails and spiders had taken to it even before its erection had been completed; but the romantic young lovers took no heed of such minute *désagréments*. Spiders are no new creation; doubtless they swarmed around Juliet's balcony, and perhaps there were myriads near the bank in Portia's garden at Belmont, where Lorenzo and Jessica sat by moon-light, and listened to the sweet harmonies stealing upon their entranced ears. When did romance take note of spiders? 'Tis only with advancing years when the golden age of youth is past, when the blood creeps sluggishly through the veins, and the impulses of the heart yield to the calm judgments of the head, that we vote damp grottoes and mossy banks the parents of rheumatic pains, neuralgic torments, and the other ills to which flesh (and especially old flesh) is subject.

"Your wife is charming," continued Price; "if she inherits her virtues from her mother, you have nothing to complain of."

"Well, you'll soon have an opportunity of judging for yourself, for if I mistake not, that is her knock," replied Valentine, as the echo of a rat-tat floated through the house and along the garden to the grotto in which the friends were seated. The neighbouring church clocks had long since chimed seven, and the period of the year being spring, a mellow twilight was rapidly enveloping the earth. Just as Val and his friend were about to leave their hiding-place, with the view of entering the house, the dining-room window opened, and the forms of two ladies were seen descending the verandah steps.

"We may as well remain where we are," said Val, pausing, "for see, the ladies are about to join us."

Presently Felicia and her mother approached, and Val went through the stereotyped form of introducing his companion to Mrs. Hope; but no sooner did the words, "Mr. Herbert Price," escape his lips than she grasped her daughter's arm, and suddenly drew back a few paces.

"Mamma dear," cried Felicia, startled by the sudden movement, "what ails you?"

"Nothing, nothing, my child," murmured Mrs. Hope; "a spasm, nothing more. It is gone now."

With the sound of her voice Herbert Price's cheek flushed, and his heart beat violently. He was at the back of the grotto, and for a few seconds leant against the rockwork for support. The semi-darkness which prevailed concealed the agitation occasioned by the accents of a voice, whose every note had once thrilled his soul, but which he had never expected to hear again. Quickly recovering himself, however, he advanced, and bowing stiffly, said, "If I mistake

not, I knew Mrs. Hope when she bore another name."

"Dear me, how strange, mamma!" said Felicia. "Can it be possible that you knew Mr. Price before you were married?"

"Mr. Price is not mistaken," responded Mrs. Hope; "before I wedded your father we often met."

Obedient to a sign made him by his guest, Valentine drew to the side of his wife, and taking her arm, said, "Perhapp, Felicia, two such long-parted friends may have much to say to each other, and we may be in the way." The young man has never yet comprehended how, from the few words spoken on either side, he felt that his mother-in-law and Herbert Price desired to be alone. It was one of those instinctive thoughts that come but seldom in a lifetime—a thought upon which we at once act without further consideration. Felicia felt no such impulse, but calmly submitted to the superior will of her husband, and together they entered the house.

For a few moments the elderly pair left in the garden were silent. Herbert Price still stood by the entrance to the grotto, whilst Mrs. Hope remained a few feet from him, nervously destroying a half-blossomed rose she had just gathered.

"I feel," he said, "that some explanation should be made of my presence. Having been acquainted with Mr. Hardy for some years, I came by his invitation to be introduced to his wife and home. Believe me, had I expected to meet in Mrs. Hardy's mother the Blanche Tressell I once knew, no power, no influence in the whole world could have persuaded me to be here." He spoke thickly, his emotion betraying itself in every word he uttered, whilst his limbs trembled as though ague-stricken.

"I do believe it, for I know it to be the truth. Mr. Price—Herbert, I merit all your scorn and reproach; but were you acquainted with the circumstances which led to my conduct twenty-two years since, you would look with an extenuating eye upon my crime, even though you might not be able to forgive me. Shall I proceed?"

She involuntarily drew towards him, but he made no movement, save a slight inclination of his head for her to continue her story.

"Long before I wedded Colonel Hope, my father was deeply involved in debt; a combination of commercial misfortunes dragged him deeper and deeper into the slough of bankruptcy, and he knew that an accident might any day lead to a disclosure of the true state of his affairs. Though not vehemently opposing my betrothal to you, he took care during your absence in Australia, whither you had gone on a special mission connected with the journal upon which you were engaged, to advocate the claims of Colonel Hope, then home from India on furlough. Your rival was assiduous in his attentions, and if he was much older than myself, could boast of a handsome income in addition to his pay. He became a favourite with my father, and was a constant visitor. Day by day attempts were made on all sides to undermine my constancy, for I loved you, Herbert, truly, fondly, with all the fresh affection of budding womanhood. One day, worn and harassed with business disappointments, my father lay upon a sick-bed dangerously ill, the doctors despairing of his recovery. Calling me to his side, he declared that naught could bring peace to his last moments but the promise that I would become Colonel Hope's bride. Terrified and heart-sick, I gave my hand to your rival. Shortly after that my father died. Though I dared not write to you, I hoped that you would have returned to claim me. But the months passed; Colonel Hope's leave of absence was on the point of expiring, and he sought the fulfilment of my promise. A week after our marriage we embarked for India, whither I remained until a year after his death. I had never heard of you in the interval, and deemed that, like myself, you had wedded another. To my husband I was a faithful true wife; he knew my love was not his, but he was satisfied with the respect and consideration I paid him. For you, Herbert, my love has never wavered. It has lain dormant in my breast for years, but with this meeting has again sprung into life with all the freshness of youth." Tears sprang to her eyes as she extended her hand to him. "Let me beg, in conclusion," she said, "that the fact of our engagement in years gone by may be kept from Felicia. I would not wish her to know the reasons that induced me to wed her father."

"You have my promise, Blanche," exclaimed Price, ecstatically grasping her hand and holding it within his own. "Save what I am compelled to tell Valentine, no word of the past shall escape my lips. It is a secret locked as securely in my bosom as in yours."

"And can you forgive me?"

"On one condition only." He felt her hand tremble in turn as he drew her nearer him, but she made no attempt to withdraw it. "Blanche, I have long lived a solitary hopeless life, and my pecuniary resources have not improved to the extent they should during the progress of so many years. But were it possible, I would wish to regard the past as a dream from which we have just awakened." He paused, but she knew the words that were upon his lips. "Blanche," he murmured, "may I renew the vows made you in my youth?"

The moon was now high in the heavens, and shed its tranquil light into the little garden. The reunited pair had retreated to the shadow of the grotto, but as Blanche Hope raised her eyes and looked into his with all the fond hopeful trust of former days, he knew his question was answered in the affirmative, though no sound broke the stillness of the night.

And you will be my wife, darling?"

Her voice, subdued to the faintest murmur, but loud enough to reach his eager ears, gave forth an acquiescent response, and clasping her in his arms, he kissed her forehead.

"Well," cried Valentine Hardy, when a couple of hours after, he accompanied his friend to the omnibus, "who could have guessed the turn events have taken? From me Felicia shall never know of your engagement in early life; but I trust you'll both decide not to live far from us. My wife and I will miss the mamma awfully." Then bursting into a hearty roar of laughter, Val exclaimed, "By jove, old man, you've belted the cat!"

The application of the fable excited the merriment of both, but omnibuses (very much like the traditional time and tide) will wait for no man; and so the friends, in the best of humours, were compelled to part.

Somehow or other Herbert Price's apartment in the dingy street off the Strand did not seem half so dull and cheerless as when he quitted it, and yet no living soul had entered the room during his absence. The improved appearance perhaps arose from the alteration in his spirits. He bustled about the place humming a merry air, and then went to bed, to dream of the realization of bright hopes, of wedding-bells, a comfortable home, a loving wife, and devoted friends. The best of it was that, unlike most dreams, this one was fulfilled.

AGGIE'S LETTER.

There they lay before me—two letters—both written in bold characters. One commenced, "Darling Annie," and the other, "Dear Miss Marshall." Both letters contained proposals of marriage, and as I looked again and again at them, a troubled feeling stirred my breast. I felt very sorry for poor Percy, as I must say no to him, knowing how good and noble he was, and liking him almost as well as his brother Eugene, who had been my devoted lover since the tender age of six. Many a time had we quarreled and made up; many a time had he vowed to make me his wife some day, and as often had I vowed never to make so ridiculous a disposition of myself; but in all this time I had never dreamed that his staid brother Percy cared more for me than was natural for a dear friend. But here was a proposal solemnly worded, to be answered in like manner; and I did feel sorry to say no to him, for Jean had labored in my service too long to be dismissed.

Leaving my head on my hands, I thought now if Percy had only liked Sister Aggie, 'twould have been all right but, as it was, I could do nothing but write a kind rejection of his proposal. I accordingly did so, and after this task was accomplished, I scribbled three words to Jean, and rose to go downstairs. I paused a minute to consider if it were best to tell Aggie all, and finally concluded to keep my secret for the present at least.

Aggie was six years my senior, and almost an old maid in appearance, though her soft, quiet beauty was just at its zenith. We were very fond of each other.

Emerging softly, I went down the stairs. It was twilight; the lamps were not yet lit, and the old hall looked dim in the shadows. I was passing in the door, when suddenly I drew back and listened, for I could see sister Aggie at the piano, with her head bowed on her hands. She seldom sang, and thinking she was remembering some old piece, I determined not to disturb her but listen in silence. Suddenly her soft white fingers touched the keys, and it seemed to me they called forth the sweetest music I had ever heard. Anon, her voice lent a tremulous pathos to the old love-song, whose words seemed breathed from her very heart. Low and tender sobbed the music.

And so Aggie, too, loved, else she could never have sung that song so sweetly sad. Tears came to my eyes. I stole in, and kneeling at her feet, I bowed my head on her breast, and told her of my proposal from Jean. She stroked my hair, kissed me, and said:

"Is that all you were going to tell me? You seemed to hesitate about something."

"No, Aggie, it is not all. Percy also wrote me a letter declaring, is love. Poor Percy! I was so sorry to say no." Here I drew back, for a shudder passed over her. I raised my head quickly and saw her face was turning pale. Calm and placid had been its expression before, but now how changed.

"Did he say he loved you?" she said, trembling, looking down upon me in the twilight.

"Yes, he wrote it," I answered, almost involuntarily. "Why, Aggie, sister Aggie, what makes you so white and strange?"

"Because, child,"—and she bent forward and whispered, while her brown eyes gazed wildly into mine—"because he once said he loved me, and I have lived since then upon the words."

I sprang to my feet.

"The vile deceiver," I cried. "Let him go; he is worthy no woman's love. Thank God! Jean is not like him. Aggie, be glad you have found him out, and rejoice you have not intrusted him with your life-long affections, my dearest sister."

She rose calmly and quietly, and laying her hand firmly on my arm, she said sternly:

"Annettie, I charge you never to say a word of this to living mortal. I must have misunder-

stood him; he never could be so cruel, when he knew—

Before I could answer, she was gone, and throwing myself upon the sofa, I cried softly, my face in the pillows. Poor sister Aggie! her life was wrecked, for I knew she would never love again.

For an hour I lay there, and never rose till long after the girl had lit the gas, and then a soft step beside my couch roused me. I sprang up, and saw Aggie standing beside me, but so beautiful I could scarcely believe it was she. A rich brocade swept in graceful folds about her slender form, and her marble-like shoulders were draped in a bertha of misty lace, and gleamed like alabaster through the film. Her hair—her rich brown hair—was bound in glossy braids about her shining head, and her cheeks were flaming with a soft rich bloom. But I'm sure the glory of it all was her eyes—bright as diamonds, almost wild, and then again a soft, shy brown, shifting to an exultant splendor that excelled anything I have ever seen, or shall ever see. She put her hand upon mine; it was cold but firm.

"He is coming," she said. "I am ready to meet him."

At that moment the door-bell rang furiously. I trembled like an aspen. Aggie said not a word. A moment, and Percy Arnold stood before us; his face was pale and haggard, and he stood looking wildly at Aggie, so beautiful and firm. He advanced. He seemed to see only Aggie. He cried, in a trembling, faltering voice:

"I must hear it from her own lips. Oh, I loved you so! How cruel to send that letter!"

I drew his note of proposal from my pocket. "Here, here," I cried, "is the proof of your deception. Read it."

He snatched it, read it, and crushing it in his hands, laughed almost hysterically. Aggie's face grew white. He sprang forward and caught her.

"This was for you," he almost shouted—"for you—only you! 'Twas a mistake, Aggie love—"

Here I heard Jean's voice in the hall, and sprang out to meet him.

"Here you are!" he cried. "But what means this trace of tears?"

I only pushed him into the sitting-room, and there laughingly told him of my mistake.

"All's well that ends well," he exclaimed; "and here is a paper that will bind Miss Annie to keep her promise. Here it is—simply this: 'Old Tease, I hereby promise to become your better-half within the space of three years. Annie Marshall.'"

I snatched it away; but Jean declared, if I destroyed it, he would prove by his brother that I had solemnly made such a promise.

That silenced me; for, whenever Percy's name was mentioned, my face turned red, and could not but mourn over my mistake in claiming Aggie's letter as my own.

THE JUDGE'S STORY.

"I don't see how I could have done more for him than I did; but still the man should not have been punished—he should have been acquitted."

With these words the Judge awoke to the consciousness that he had a fellow-traveller; and then, as if some explanation of his remark would be in order, he went on:

"We had a very interesting trial in Austin last week; Tom Carberry—Irish Tom he is called—was tried for murder. I defended him, and never struggled harder for a client in my life. For a week before, and throughout the trial, I worked night and day to look up testimony, and to present the case to the jury in the best possible light. I consulted with all the attorneys not engaged for the prosecution. We got him off with three years in the penitentiary; but he ought not have been punished—he should have been acquitted."

The fellow-passenger queried as to the circumstances attending the alleged murder, and the Judge answered:

"They were very peculiar, and that is the reason why the trial was so very interesting. A woman up in Montana, who never saw Tom Carberry, thought that he had done her great wrong; and so, when she was asked, as the phrase is, to 'take up with a new man,' she named her terms:

"Kill Tom Carberry, of Austin, Nevada."

"But I never saw nor heard of the man," said the Montana aspirant.

"Nevertheless," said she, "kill Tom Carberry."

"It is the depth of winter," was objected, "and we are hundreds of miles from Austin. The journey cannot now be made."

"Kill him in the spring," said the unrelenting woman.

"Yes," said he, and the compact was sealed.

With the opening of travel in spring there arrived at Salt Lake City, by the Montana stage, an individual who freely announced that he was on his way to kill Carberry. Salt Lake City is a long way from Austin, but the friendships of border men span much greater distances. Tom was quickly advised of the approach of his visitor, but he took no steps either to get out of the way or to be specially prepared to see company. He was then employed at the Keystone Mill, nine miles from town, and he stayed there nearly a whole week after he knew that the Montana chap was in Austin. You see Tom is a peaceable man, and he didn't want any

difficulty. Most men would have come in at once, and got the affair off their hands!"

The listener entertained doubts at this point, but saying nothing, the judge proceeded:

"Saturday evening, just as usual with him, Tom came into the city, and after getting shaved and fixed-up for his holiday, he went around to the saloons, where many of the people of the mining towns spend their leisure, to meet his friends. It wasn't long before he encountered the Montana fellow, who began at once in Tom's hearing, to make insulting remarks."

Here the listener interrupted with: "Why did he make insulting remarks? If he had made a long journey solely for the purpose of killing Tom, why didn't he shoot him off-hand?"

"Because," said the Judge, "that would have been murder. The community is down on murder, and he would have been dangling from an awning-beam in fifteen minutes. Killing is a very different matter. When two men get into a fight, and all is fair between them, and one kills the other, the community don't ordinarily seem to feel much concern on the subject. Under such circumstances, the only way for Montana was to provoke Tom to a quarrel, and lead up to a fight. But Tom wasn't disposed to gratify him—he wouldn't take any notice—didn't seem to hear; but repeatedly left one saloon to go to another, just to keep out of the way. Montana followed him up until, at last, standing right before Tom, he jumped up about two feet from the floor, and came down with a heavy jar, and said: 'I'm Chief!' Even this Tom didn't resent—he only put his hands over his face and wept! Fact, sir, the tears actually flowed, until his best friends thought he was an arrant coward; and when he got up and went away to his room to bed, there wasn't one of them to say a good word for him."

"Montana enjoyed a season of glory. He had said, 'I'm Chief!' in a public place, and no man had dared accept the challenge."

"The next morning Tom was standing on the sidewalk, when Montana came along, and they met face to face. Tom spoke to him in a very quiet, low tone, saying:

"Stranger, you used me pretty rough last night, but I don't bear malice. Jest say that you'd been drinkin' and didn't mean it, and we'll say no more about it."

"Montana answered: 'No apologies in mine.'"

"Well," said Tom, "you needn't apologize, come into the saloon and chink glasses with me and we'll let the matter drop."

"Then Montana said: 'Tom Carberry, either you're generous, or else you're a coward. I don't think you're cowardly, an' if I'd know you at the start, it's most likely I wouldn't have waded in. But the matter can't be let drop, for there's hundred of people in my section an' between here and there who know that I came here to kill you; so there's but two ways—we must fight, or you must run. If you'll run, it'll be jest as good to me as to fight.'"

"Tom's almost suppliant bearing disappeared on the instant and he said: 'Stanger, I ain't much in the habit o' runnin', an' if we're to fight we may as well have it out now as any time. Are you heeled?'"

"Tom asked this question because we have a law against carrying concealed weapons, which is regarded at such hours as people think they will have no use for their arm, and disregarded at all others."

"The answer was: 'No: I left my revolver with the bar-keeper of the Exchange.'"

"Get it," said Tom; "I'll wait for you here."

"The Exchange was in a corner building across a street which came in at right angles to the sidewalk where they were standing. Montana went in at the front door but came out at the side on the cross street, hoping to steal up and get the 'drop' on Tom; but this was not so easy. Tom was wide awake; he had crossed the main street to guard against surprise; so, when Montana poked his pistol around the corner and followed it with just enough of his head to take sight, Carberry was not in range. In a moment their eyes met, and the shooting began. Tom curled down close to the road-bed, to present the smallest possible area as a mark, and because it is comparatively difficult to hit an object lying on the ground. Montana sheltered himself somewhat behind a low row of sacks of potatoes lying on the edge of the sidewalk, and partly behind a small awning-post. This last was a fatal error, for with a tall post for a mark it is the easiest thing in the world to make a line shot."

"I am making a long story of the shooting, which in reality was very soon over. They fired three shots apiece in as many seconds. Tom's third ball passed through Montana's heart, and he was dead before his head rebounded on the brick pavement. Carberry surrendered himself at once, and was kept in jail until his trial came off, although bail to any amount was offered."

After a pause, the Judge added: "I don't see how I could have done more for him than I did; but the man should not have been punished—he should have been acquitted; and he would have been but for one circumstance, which prejudiced the court and jury against him."

"What was the circumstance so prejudicial?" questioned the listener.

"The Montana chap was the fourth man Tom had killed in Austin," answered the Judge, innocently.—*Overland Monthly.*

"THE FAVORITE"

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THE FAVORITE

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NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS.

We request intending contributors to take notice that future Rejected Contributions will not be returned.

Letters requiring a private answer should always contain a stamp for return postage.

No notice will be taken of contributions unaccompanied by the name and address of the writer (not necessarily for publication,) and the Editor will not be responsible for their safe keeping.

CONTRIBUTIONS DECLINED.

Queer Day's Fishing; A Wayward Woman; Christmas Eve on the Snow; Miss March's Christmas Eve; Love in Poetry; Delays are Dangerous: The Wrong Boat; Three Lovers; Poetical Temperance Tale; George Leitrim; The Mysterious Letter; Trial and Triumphs of Elizabeth Ray, School Teacher; Little Mrs. Rivington; Sentenced to Death; The New Teacher; Harris Lockwood; The Backwoods Schoolmaster; Mrs. Power's Lucky Day; Nick Plowshare's Fairy Story; That Emigrant Girl; The Phantom Trapper; A Romance of Poutsville; My Cousin Coralie; The Dying Year's Lament; Dawn; Improvisation; Skeletons; He Will Return; Susie; The Merchant's Reward; A Night at St. Aubé's; And Then; Blossom and Blight; Esther's Lovers; The Mystery of Boutwell Hall; Mount Royal Cemetery; Blighted Hopes; Minnie Lee's Valentines; Eva Hilltor's Valentine; A Tom Cat in the Breach; The Fatal Stroke; Only a Farmer; Meta's Broken Faith; How We Spend a Holiday in Newfoundland; Twice Wedded; John Jones and His Bargain; The Clouded Life; My Own Canadian Home; The Lost Atlantic; Gay and Grave Gossip; Lovely Spring; From India to Canada; Resurgam; A Railway Nap and its Consequences; Love or Money; For His Sake; Showed In; The False Heart and the True; Leave Me; Is There Another Shore; Weep Not For Me; Those Old Grey Walls; The Step-mother; Tom Arnold's Charge; Worth, Not Wealth; Miriam's Love; Modern Conveniences; Little Clare; Mirabile Dictu; Up the Saguenay; Ella Loring; Charles Foot; The Heroine of Mount Royal; The Rose of Fernhurst; Photographing Our First-born; Neskeonough Lake; A Midnight Adventure; Jean Douglas; The Restored Lover; Woman's Courage; A Story in a Story; Tried and True; Dr. Solon Sweetbottle; Second Sight; Eclipses; Geneviève Duclos; Our Destiny; Port Royal; Night Thoughts; Mr. Bouncer's Travels; Watching the Dead; Delusions; To Shakespeare; An Adventuress; The Wandering Minstrel; Spring; The White Man's Revenge; The Lilacs; A Trip Around the Stove; My First Situation; An Unfortunate Resurrection; Our John; Kitty Merle; History of William Wood; Willersleigh Hall; A Night at Mrs. Manning's; Won and Lost; The Lady of the Falls; Chronicles of Willoughby Centre; Why Did She Doubt Him; Jack Miller the Drover; Ellen Mayford; Recompensed.

These MSS. will be preserved until the Fourth of January next, and if not applied for by that time will be destroyed. Stamps should be sent for return postage.

The Age of Vulgar Glitter; Mrs. Seymore's Curls; To the Absent; By the Waters; Almonte; To a Lover; A Fragment from the Scenes of Life; The Axle of the Heavens; The Correct View; Apostrophe to a Tear; June; A Debtor's Dilemmas; Proved; Wanted Some Beaux; Canadian Rain Storm After Long Drought; The Murderer's Mistake; Yesterday; Carrie's Hat and What Came of It; Leonie Collyer's Error; A Memory Autumn.

These MSS. will be preserved until the Twentieth of December next.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

All communications intended for this department should be addressed to the Editor FAVORITE and marked "Correspondence."

LINCOLN.—You are mistaken. Mr. Arch was delighted with Canada, and said so to the reporter of the N. Y. Tribune.

BIVALVE.—We decidedly prefer the Caracquette, though it is a little salt. We think it is one of the glories of Canada.

CONSEDINE.—We have no patience with bad spelling. Besides your handwriting was such as to make even our fireman stare.

BRISTOL.—Join a snow-shoe club most certainly. There is no manlier exercises. It has done wonders for the young men of Canada.

HARPER, St. Johns.—Thank you. We count many subscribers in your beautiful little town, and are pleased at the prospect of more.

Q.—We are not in want of a young man such as you speak of. All candidates for literary work on the FAVORITE must at least be able to spell.

HULL.—The Northern Colonization will not be retarded by the collapse of the Pacific. Two sections, at Hochelaga, are already well advanced.

DIVINATION.—See Baring-Gould's curious 'Myths of the Middle Ages'; you will there find an experiment with the ring similar to that you mention.

M. N.—It certainly would not cost you much, but on the other hand it might put the county to the expense of providing you with board and lodging gratis.

INVALID.—Plenty of fresh air and exercise are your best remedy. If you wished to get worse you could not follow a surer plan than that you have adopted.

N. L., Stanstead.—Write to J. J. Daley, government agent. Immigration will continue through the winter, via Portland, but of course, in diminished numbers.

MISERRIMUS.—We are afraid you are in for it. You should have done so before. But is your trouble so great as to justify you in adopting such a very lugubrious *nom de plume*?

MECHANIC.—The Patent Office Record and Mechanics' Magazine is the only periodical of the kind published in Canada. The subscription is one dollar fifty cents per annum.

WILLIAMSON.—One good, bright thought in an essay does certainly compensate for many commonplace. But, the trouble is we fail to see anything like a good thought in your composition.

X. Y. Z., Lachine.—We are not a corn doctor, thank goodness. Consult a professional. In the last FAVORITE, however, you will find something about castor oil and a razor which may suit you.

MISSY.—We are sorry we cannot comply with your request. Not that we know what its nature is, but you commenced your letter in such very complimentary terms that we were afraid to finish it.

J. V., Montreal.—There are no truffles in America, the more's the pity. The crack French truffle comes from Perigord. The classic land of truffles is Italy, and it has not degenerated since the days of Horace and Apuleius.

ASTRAKHAN, Montreal.—Judging from their climate, Montreal or Toronto ought to give the lead in furs. But they do not. In this, as in other fashions, we get our cue from New York where there is really no tasty style.

J., Craig Street.—We regard the Ulster coat as an abomination. You know the story about it. The Prince of Wales brought it from Ireland only for a lark and put it on one rainy night. Thereupon all the cads and flunkies adopted it.

A. L.—We admire your taste. Every number of the FAVORITE is as full of reading, as an egg is of meat. We aim at infinite variety, and the tone of the paper is such as to fit it for every bedside. An old printer told us, the other day, that it was the best "made up" paper in the Dominion.

H. D., Montreal.—You may send your verses to your love, without being ashamed of them, for they are expressive. But they will not bear publication. You ask us to "give them some name or other." We had rather not. It would take us quite a time to hunt up a name, we are very busy just now.

LINA LOUISA wants to know "if sleeping with a piece of cake under the pillow that has been passed through a wedding-ring will make a person dream of his or her future wife or husband." Probably it will if the pillow used is small enough to be passed through an ordinary wedding-ring. Not having tried we are unable to say for certain if this is the case, but we never heard anything to the contrary. Suppose you try and let us know the result. Only be careful about the size of the pillow.

HORACE.—We are sorry that you feel your lady love's unkindness so intensely. Believe us she is not worth the trouble, especially if it is true that she encouraged the visits of another gentleman during the existence of her engagement. Your release is certainly a matter for congratulation. Imagine for one moment what kind

of a life would have been yours, linked to such a woman. If she had deceived you before marriage, what would she have been after she became your wife. You think that she is unhappy, that perhaps she repents of her conduct and ask, "shall I endeavor to repair the breach?" No, the breach is better as it is.

W. H., St. Catharines, wants to know whether "Goldwin Smith has not been made too much of in this country and whether it is not to be wished that his stay in England may not be indefinitely protracted?" It is an amiable weakness of ours to make too much of any famous foreigner who comes among us. It comes of our foolish habit of self depreciation. But in the case of Goldwin Smith, we think his writings while here have provoked thought and thus done good. While his return need not be precisely sighed after, it will not be unwelcome when it comes. The Americans will certainly never ask him to return to them.

ELLIE.—You have acted throughout very wrongly and have only yourself to blame for your unhappiness. Knowing what you were about to do, yet perhaps hardly knowing the state of your own affections, you pledged your troth to a true and trusting man, a man whom you confess to be superior in honor and position to many others of your acquaintance. Why did you not treat him with the honor you admire so much in him? "He was worthy of me in every way," you say, Worthy of you! Ten times too good for you, you mean. Do not imagine this is harshness. Review your own conduct calmly, and say what would have been your verdict on any one of your female acquaintances who had acted in a similar manner. Forgetting the sanctity of the engagement you had contracted, you encouraged the advances of a man who both by that and by his subsequent conduct has proved himself to be a scoundrel. Knowing you to be engaged already he pressed his attentions upon you, and you were in no way loath to accept them. You met as lovers, you say, "striving to be honorable and yet giving way to our feelings." We do not doubt that you did give way to your feelings, that, perhaps, you honestly thought you loved the man. But that you made the slightest attempt at honorable conduct we totally deny. Had it been your wish to be honorable you would at once have cut short the dishonorable advances of Lover No. 2, and instead of mingling your tears with his, and lamenting your unhappy position you would at once have acquainted No. 1, with the state of your affections, and demanded his consent to the dissolution of your engagement. Instead of taking this straightforward course, what do you do. You told No. 2 that you intended to cancel your engagement; No. 2, replied, and this is where the villainy of the man crops out, "do nothing of the kind." This is the first act in your little tragedy. Before going on we have one remark to make. What a nice bit of scandal you would have made, if your dearest friend being engaged to A., were to meet and treat B. as a lover. How you would cry lie on the shameless thing, how you would cut her on the streets, and how by the fireside you and your gossips would wonder "how that poor Mr. A. can be so blind?" Your conduct, you see, does not look pretty when viewed with an impartial eye. Finally you break off your engagement, and immediately No. 2, now that you are free and willing to accept his addresses, quietly drops you. What does that look like? When you met you acted coldly to him (are you sure your acting was good?); and then, save the mark, you are both cutting and sarcastic in your conversation. He may well be cutting in his conversation, after the way he has trifled with you. But you! you keep it up well enough when he is by; but when he is gone you rush to your bedroom and have a good cry. You know this is the case, in spite of that fine sentence about the antagonism of your natures. Now for the answers to your questions. Tell you candidly, will you treat him indifferently? Treat him neither kindly nor too indifferently; act to him as you would to a stranger, but always with good breeding; as far as consistent with politeness, ignore him. Certainly do not "be real nice and kind to him occasionally." You have already done yourself too much harm by that. "I do want to win his love;" "do you think I have lost it?" No, we think that is hardly possible, for it is pretty evident that you never possessed it. "He is very proud," you say. Get down your dictionary and hunt up 'proud' and 'vain.' The latter the man undoubtedly is. Wants to be thought a lady-killer apparently, and has but too evidently succeeded in slaughtering your little heart. Do we think that your having been engaged to another will prevent him marrying you? We think nothing of the kind. We think he never intended to marry you; his conduct at the time your engagement was broken off sufficiently proves that. If the mere fact of your former engagement deterred him from marrying you the man is simply a snob and the best thing you can do is to cut him dead. Your final appeal is really too naïve. If we loved anybody as long and dearly as you have loved. Did not Jacob serve fourteen years for Rachel? And how long ago is it since you discovered the existence of your penchant? To sum up: you in the first place acted very badly and are now suffering for it. The biter is bit. You jilted the man who loved you, and now the man you love jilts you. It is not altogether undeserved perhaps; still don't break your heart over it. We question if you would ever be happy with No. 2. He evidently belongs to that class of men who should be compelled by statute to wear on their manly bosoms a board marked "Dangerous."

NEWS NOTES.

SMALL pox in Toronto.

ACCOUNTS from the Labrador fishery are highly satisfactory.

SIR John A. Macdonald declines to be nominated for West Toronto.

THREE thousand French Communists are still in prison awaiting trial.

FRESH revolutions are reported in Yucatan and the State of Mexico.

THE elections for the Newfoundland House of Assembly took place on the 8th.

THE Italian Parliament was opened on the 18th by King Victor Emmanuel in person.

THE Spanish press complain that the enemies of Spain telegraph false news to the United States.

ADMIRAL Porter reports the United States fleet unfit for war and unable to cope with Spain's.

NAVAL preparations of a warlike character are still going on at the different United States dock-yards.

THE failure of the grain crop last summer has produced great destitution in a portion of north-western Iowa.

WHEELER, the coadjutor of the notorious Horace Cocks, has instituted a libel suit against the Toronto Mail.

A plot for the establishment of the Commune in Lyons, France, has been discovered and several arrests have taken place.

MR. VERNON HARCOURT has been appointed Solicitor-General vice Mr. Henry James, who has been appointed Attorney General.

SEVENTEEN Cuban conspirators are reported to have been executed for complicity in a plot to co-operate with the Virginus party.

ALL members of the Spanish army reserve have been ordered to report in person at the depots of their respective corps within a fortnight.

HALIFAX and vicinity has been visited by a severe gale and rain storm which inflicted considerable damage on shipping and other property.

THE Tweed jury have brought in a verdict of guilty on all the counts. Tweed has been sentenced to four years' imprisonment, and to pay a fine of \$4,000.

THE Germany Federal Council has ordered a distribution among the States of the Empire of another instalment of the French war indemnity, amounting to 30,000,000 thalers.

THE plan of constructing a railway in connection with the Ashantee expedition has been given up as impracticable, and the shipment of rails from England is countermanded.

THE Dean of Westminster has been appointed to proceed to St. Petersburg to perform the Protestant marriage of the Duke of Edinburgh with the Grand Duchess Maria of Russia.

MINISTER SICKLES authorized the London agent of the Associated Press to contradict the sensational reports published in the New York papers regarding him in his official capacity.

A special despatch from Berlin to the London Times says that in consequence of the formation of fortified camps at Belfour, Besançon and Verdun, Prussia will increase her military reserves.

THE Spanish Cabinet are unanimously in favor of a satisfactory and honorable settlement of the "Virginus" difficulty, but regard the maintenance of the integrity of Spanish territory as essential.

ONLY 18 out of the 111 "Virginus" prisoners have been spared, of these four were condemned to the chain gang for life, three to 8 years' imprisonment, eight to 4 years' imprisonment, and three were set at liberty.

ADVICES from Japan state that on the 24th October the Mikado's Ministry, with two exceptions, sent in their resignations, which were accepted, though some have since withdrawn them. The trouble arose from a proposition to send an expedition against Corea.

THE latest despatches received by the War Office from Sir Garnet Wolseley, commander of the expedition against the Ashantees, gives favorable accounts of its progress. The General writes exultantly of the excellent moral effect on the troops of the recent skirmishes with the savages.

PRESIDENT Grant stated in conversation, recently that the United States authorities had acted on all the information received in regard to the "Virginus affair," that they were now busy collecting further information, and future action shall be such as will meet the approval of the American people.

BISHOP McIntyre and Rev. Father McDonald, of Prince Edward Island, had an interview with the Government, to obtain a guarantee that should the Local Legislature of their Province adopt the denominational school system, they would be supported by the Dominion Cabinet. The reply of Mr. Mackenzie was favourable.

THE Spanish war steamer "Arapiles," now under repairs at the Navy Yard, Brooklyn, has a crew of 500 men, including officers, and carries nineteen guns, two of which throw three hundred pound shot. The "Arapiles" has four superiors in the Spanish navy and as many more her equal. She has been seized by the United States authorities.

IN MEMORIAM.

On a bosom of a river,
Where the sun unloosed its quiver
And the starlight gleamed forever,
Sailed a vessel light and free.
Morning drew-drops hung like manna
On the bright folds of her banner,
And the zephyrs rose to fan her,
Softly to the radiant sea.

At her prow, a pilot, beaming
In the flush of youth, stood dreaming,
And he was in glorious seeming
Like an angel from above.
Through his hair the breezes sported,
And as on the wave he floated,
Oft that pilot, angel throated,
Warbled lays of hope and love.

Through those locks so blithely flowing
Buds of laurel bloom were blowing,
And his hands full soon were throwing
Music from a lyre of gold.
Swiftly down the stream he glided,
Soft the purple wave divided,
And a rainbow arch divided
On his canvas' snowy fold.

Anxious hearts with fond devotion
Watched him sailing to the ocean,
Prayed that never wild commotion
Mid the elements might rise.
And he seemed like some Apollo
Charming summer winds to follow,
While the water flag's low carol
Trembled to his music sighs.

Then there rushed with lightning quickness
O'er his face a mortal sickness,
And the dew in fearful thickness
Gathered o'er his temple fair.
And there swept a dying murmur
Through the lovely Southern summer,
As the beauteous pilot came,
Perished by that city there.

Still rolls on that radiant river,
And the sun unbinds his quiver.
And the sunlight streams forever
On its bosom as before.
But the vessel's rainbow banner
Gleets no more the gay Savanna,
And that pilot's lute drops manna
On the purple waves no more.

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PUBLICANS and SINNERS

A LIFE PICTURE.

BY MISS. M. E. BRADDON,

Author of "Lady Audley's Secret," "To The Bitter End," "The Outcasts," &c., &c.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER XII.—Continued.

Mrs. Wincher led the way upstairs, and to one of the doors in the corridor out of which Mr. Sivewright's room opened. For the first time Lucius found himself in Lucille's room—a spacious airy apartment, with three windows deep set in the solid walls, and provided with broad oak window-seats. A scantily furnished chamber, yet with that grace and prettiness of aspect which a girl's taste can give to the poorest surroundings. There were books, a few water-coloured sketches on the walls, a few oddments of old china tastefully disposed on the high oak chimney-piece, white muslin curtains to the windows, a well-worn Persian carpet in the centre of the dark oak floor—everywhere the most perfect neatness, cleanliness the most scrupulous.

Lucille was sleeping when Lucius and Mrs. Wincher entered; but at the sound of her lover's footsteps, lightly as he trod, she started, opened her eyes, and looked at him.

O, how sad to see those sweet eyes looking at him thus, without recognition! how sad to mark that dreamy unconscious stare in eyes that yesterday had been full of meaning! Lucius sank into a chair by the bed, fairly overcome. It was some moments before he was sufficiently master of himself to approach the case professionally, to go through the usual formula, with an aching heart.

She was very ill, with such an illness as might have been easily induced by long-continued anxiety and want of rest—anxious days, sleepless nights. The gravest feature in the case was the delirium—the inability to recognise familiar faces.

"Lucille," he said, in a low tender voice, "don't you know me?"

She did not answer him. Her head moved wearily on the pillow from side to side, while her lips murmured something. Lucius bent over her to catch the words.

"You shouldn't have come here, father," she said, "if you couldn't forgive him. But no, no, you could not do him any harm—you could not be so vile as that. I have loved you so dearly. Papa, don't you remember—the violin—our happy evenings?"

Thus the parched lips went on, in low broken murmurs, which were sometimes quite unintelligible.

"It's been all her father since she was took that way," said Mrs. Wincher.

"Strange that her mind should brood thus upon that one memory," said Lucius—"the one tender remembrance of her childhood."

He lingered for some time by the bedside, listening to those indistinct murmurs in which the name of "father" was so often repeated. Then he began to consider what he must do to secure the safety of this beloved sufferer.

To leave her in the custody of people whom he believed guilty of the deepest iniquity was not to be dreamed of. He must get rid of those Winchers at any hazards, bring in a sick nurse upon whose fidelity he could rely, and so far as it was possible, keep watch upon the premises himself by day and night.

Get rid of the Winchers? How was that to be done? He had no authority for their dismissal.

There was one way, he thought hazardous perhaps for his patient, but tolerably certain of immediate success. He must inform Mr. Sivewright of the robbery, and state on whom his suspicions fell. There was little doubt that on learning he had been robbed the *bric-à-brac* dealer would dismiss his old servants. The first thing to be done was to get the sick nurse and secure Lucille's safety, come what might.

He told Mrs. Wincher that he would return in half an hour or so to see her master, and left the house without giving her any farther hint as to his intention. He knew of a nurse in the immediate neighborhood, a woman of the comfortable motherly order, of whose ministrations among his patients he had had ample experience, and he hailed the first cab that hove in sight, and drove off in quest of this honest matron. Fortune favored him. Mrs. Milderson, the nurse—like Mrs. Gamp, sick and monthly—had just returned from an interesting case in the West India-road.

On this worthy woman Lucius descended like a whirlwind; would hardly give her time to rummage up an apron or two and a clean print gown, let alone her brush and comb—as she said plaintively—ere he whisked her into the devouring jaws of the hansom, which swallowed her up, bundle and all, and conveyed her with almost electric speed to Cedar House.

Mrs. Wincher stared again amain at this interloper, and would fain have kept her on the outer side of the iron gate.

"And pray, Dr. Davory, what may this good lady want?" she asked, surveying the nurse and bundle with looks of withering scorn.

"This good lady's name is Milderson; she is an honest and trustworthy person, and she has come to nurse Miss Sivewright."

"May I ask, Dr. Davory, by whose orders?"

"By mine, the young lady's medical attendant and her future husband," answered Lucius. "This way, if you please, Milderson. I'll talk to you presently, Mrs. Wincher."

He passed that astonished female, who stood agape, staring after him with bewildered looks, and then raising her eyes aloft to outraged Heaven—

"And me not thought good enough to nurse our missy!" she ejaculated. "Me that took her through the measles, and had her on my lap three blessed days and nights with the chicken-pox. I couldn't have thought it of you, Dr. Davory. And a stranger brought into this house without by your leave nor with your leave! Who's to be responsible for the safety of the bric-à-brac after this, I should like to know!"

Having propounded this question to the unresponsive sky, Mrs. Wincher uttered a loud groan, as if disappointed at receiving no answer, and then slowly dragged her weary way to the house, sliding one slipped foot after the other in deepest dejection. She walked up-stairs with the same slipshod step, and waited in the corridor out-side Lucille's room with folded arms and a countenance in which a blank stare had succeeded to the workings of indignation.

This stony visage confronted Lucius when he emerged from the sick room, after about a quarter of an hour employed in giving directions to Mrs. Milderson.

"Do you mean to say, Dr. Davory, that I'm not to nurse my young missy?" asked Mrs. Wincher, stifled emotion trembling in every accent.

"That is my intention, Mrs. Wincher," answered Lucius severely. "First and foremost, you are not an experienced nurse; and secondly, I cannot trust you."

"Not experienced, after taking that blessed dear through the chicken-pox, which she had it worse than ever chicken-pox was known with! Id the meemry of the chemist round the corner, in Condict-street, where I got the gray powders as I gave her, and after walking about with her in the measles till I was ready to drop! Not to be trusted after twenty years' faithful service! O, Dr. Davory, I couldn't have thought it of you!"

"Twenty years' service is a poor certificate if it ends in robbery and attempted murder," answered Lucius quietly.

"Attempted murder!" echoed Mrs. Wincher, aghast.

"Yes, that's a terrible word, Mrs. Wincher,

isn't it? And this is the worst of all murders—domestic murder—the slow and secret work of the poisoner, whose stealthy hand introduces death into the medicine that should heal, the food that should nourish. Of all forms of assassination there can be none so vile as that."

Mrs. Wincher uttered no syllable of reply. She could only gaze at the speaker in dumb wonderment. She began to fear that this young man was going mad.

"He's been eggzitting and werrying of hisself till he's on the high road to a lunacy asylum," she said to herself presently, when Lucius had passed her and gone into Mr. Sivewright's room.

"You took away my medicine yesterday morning," said the invalid in his most querulous tone, "and sent me none to replace it. However, as I feel much better without it, your physyc was no loss."

"Pardon my inattention," said Lucius; "and you really feel better without the medicine? Those troublesome symptoms have abated, eh?"

They had abated Mr. Sivewright said, and he went on to describe his condition, in which there was positive improvement.

"I'm glad to find you so much better," Lucius said, "for you will be able to hear some rather disagreeable intelligence. You have been robbed."

"Robbed!" cried the old man, starting up in his bed as if moved by a galvanic battery. "Robbed! Yes, I thought as much when I heard those footsteps. Robbed! My collection rifled of its gems, I suppose. The Capodi Monte—the Copenhagen—the old Roman medals in the ebony cabinet—the Boucher tapestry!" he exclaimed, running over the catalogue of his treasures breathlessly.

"These are safe for anything I know to the contrary. You had a monstrence in silver-gilt?"

"Gold!" cried the old man; "twenty-carat gold! I had it assayed. I gave thirty pounds for that monstrence to an old scoundrel who was going to break it up for the sake of the gems, and who believed it was lacquer. It had been stolen from some foreign church, no doubt. The emeralds alone are worth two hundred pounds. You don't mean to tell me I've been robbed of that?"

"I'm sorry to say that and some pieces of old silver are missing, but I hope to recover them."

"Recover the dead from the bottom of the sea and bring them to life again!" cried Mr. Sivewright vehemently. "You might do that as easily as the other. Why, those things were in the muniment chest, and Wincher had the key. He has kept that key for the last twenty years."

"Some one has found his way to the chest in spite of Mr. Wincher's care," answered Lucius gravely.

He went on to relate the particulars of the robbery. The old man got out of bed while he was talking, and began to drag on his clothes with trembling hands.

"I will not lie here to be plundered," he exclaimed, profoundly agitated.

"Now, that is what I feared," cried Lucius.

"If you do not obey me implicitly, I shall repent having told you the truth. You must remain in this room till you are strong enough to leave it. You can surely trust me to protect the property in which your generous confidence has given me the strongest interest."

"True, you are as much interested as I am," muttered the old man; "nay, more so, for life is before you, and is nearly over with me. My interest in these things is a vanishing one; yet I doubt if there would be rest for me in the grave if those fruits of my life's labor were in jeopardy."

"Will you trust me to take care of this house and all it contains?" asked Lucius anxiously.

"Will you give me authority to dismiss these Winchers, whom I cannot but suspect of complicity with the thief, whoever he may be?"

"Yes, dismiss them. They have robbed me, no doubt, I was a fool to trust old Wincher with the key of that chest; but he has served me so long, and I thought there was a dog-fidelity in his nature, that he would be content to grub on to the end of his days, asking nothing more than food and shelter. I thought it was against his interests to rob me. At his age a man should cling to his home as a mussel sticks to his rock. The fellow is as sober as an anchorite. One would suppose he could have no motive for dishonesty. But you had better dismiss him."

"I have your permission to do so?"

"Yes."

"Thank you, sir. It seems a hard thing, but I am convinced it is the right course. I will get your house taken good care of, depend upon it."

"I trust you implicitly," answered the old man, with a faint sigh, half fatigue, half despondency. "You are the only friend I have upon earth—except Lucille. Why has she not been to me this morning?"

"She is not very well. Anxiety and want of rest have prostrated her for a little while."

"Ill!" said Mr. Sivewright anxiously; "that is bad. Poor little Lucille!"

"Pray don't be uneasy about her; be assured I shall be watchful."

"Yes, I am sure of that."

"I have brought in a nurse—now, you mustn't be angry with me, though in this matter I have disobeyed you—a thoroughly honest, competent woman, who will attend to you and Lucille too."

"I detest strangers," said Mr. Sivewright; "but I suppose I must submit to the inevitable."

"Now, I want your permission to remain in

the house for a night or two. I would stay altogether, were it not for the possibility of night patients. I can occupy the little room next this, and shall be at hand to attend you. Lucille has returned to her own room."

"Do as you please," answered Mr. Sivewright with wonderful resignation, "so long as you protect me from robbery."

"With God's help I will protect you from every peril. By the way, since you say my medicine has done you no good, you shall take no more. Your food shall be prepared according to my directions, and brought you by Mrs. Milderson, the nurse. I told you some time ago that yours was a case in which I attached more importance to diet than to drugs. And now I'll go and settle matters with Mr. and Mrs. Wincher."

He had not far to go. Mrs. Wincher was still in the corridor, waiting for him with stony visage and folded arms.

"I should be glad to see your husband, Mrs. Wincher," said Lucius.

"My good gentleman is down-stairs, sir, and will be happy to wait upon you directly minute."

Lucius went down to the hall with Mrs. Wincher. Her good gentleman was pottering about among his master's treasures, with a dusting-brush.

"Mr. Wincher," said Lucius without preamble, "I have come to the determination that, under the very unpleasant circumstances which have arisen in this house, plain sailing is the wisest course. I have therefore informed Mr. Sivewright of the robbery."

"Indeed, sir! I should have thought you'd hardly have ventured that while he's so ill. And how did he take it?"

"Better than I expected: but he agreed with me as to the necessity of a step which I proposed to him."

"What might that be, sir?"

"That you and Mrs. Wincher should immediately leave this house."

The old man, who was feeble and somewhat bowed with age and hard work, drew himself up with an offended dignity that might have become a prince of the blood-royal.

"If that is my master's decision I am ready to go, sir," he said, without a quaver in his weak old voice. "If that is my master's decision after three-and-twenty years' faithful service, I cannot go too soon. Deborah, get our bits of things together, my dear, as fast as you conveniently can, while I go out and look about me for a room."

"Lemaitre, at his best, was not a finer actor than this old man," thought Lucius. "It is the perfection of art."

Mrs. Wincher only stared and breathed hard. In her, indignation had paralysed the power of speech.

"If it were a mere question of the robbery," said Lucius, "I should not have counselled your dismissal. It would have gone hard with me if, once put upon my guard, I could not have protected the property in this house. But there is one thing more valuable than a man's property, and more difficult to protect, and that is his life. The reason of your dismissal, Mr. Wincher, is that there has been an attempt made by some one in this house—and you best know how many it contains—to poison your old master."

"Poison!" echoed Mr. Wincher helplessly.

"Yes, I discovered arsenic last night in a half-filled medicine bottle which I took from your master's room. Some one had introduced arsenic into the medicine since it left my hands. Mr. Sivewright's symptoms of late have been those of arsenical poisoning. Under such circumstances you can hardly wonder that I wish to bring about a change of occupants in this house."

"No, sir," answered the old man, "I don't wonder. Poison!—a poisoner at work in this house where we have watched so faithfully! It is too horrible. It is a mystery beyond my power to fathom. There have been only three of us in the house—my wife, and Miss Lucille, and me. And you think it was I or my wife that put poison into that bottle. Well, I can't wonder at that. It couldn't be Miss Lucille, so it lies between my wife and me. We're best out of the house, sir, after that. This house is no place for us. I hope you'll contrive to take good care of my master when we're gone, and I pray God that it may please Him in His good time to enlighten your mind about us, and to show, somehow, that neither I nor my good lady have tried to murder the master we've served faithfully for nigh upon a quarter of a century."

"If you are innocent, Mr. Wincher, I trust that fact may be speedily demonstrated. In the mean time you can hardly wonder that I think this house a safer place without your presence in it."

"No, sir, that's natural enough. Deborah, my good soul, will you get together those things of ours? The sooner the better."

"I'll do what I can," answered Mrs. Wincher, with a gasp; "but I don't feel as if I had the proper use of my limbs."

"There's the catalogue, sir," suggested Mr. Wincher. "Hadden't we better go through that before I leave, and see what is right and what isn't? It'll take some time, but it will be for the satisfaction of both parties. I've one catalogue, sir, and Mr. Sivewright another."

"You are vastly conscientious, sir," said Lucius; "but as it would take at least a day to go through these things, and as my ignorance unfits me for the task, I think I will take my chance, and not oppose any hindrance to your prompt departure. I'll wait hereabouts till Mrs. Wincher is ready."

"As you please, sir." In that case I'll go off at once and look about me for a room."

"Stay, Mr. Wincher," cried Lucius, as the old man shuffled off towards the door; "I should be sorry for you to leave this house penniless. Here are a couple of sovereigns, which will enable you to live for a week or so while you look for a new service."

"A new service, sir!" echoed Mr. Wincher bitterly. "Do you think that at my age situations are plentiful? No, sir, thank you; I couldn't take money from you, not if it was to save me from starvation. I shall seek no new service. Mr. Sivewright was never a very liberal paymaster, and since we came to this house he has given us no wages except a small allowance for our food. But our wants are few, and we contrived to save the best part of our wages while we were in Bond-street. No, sir, I am not afraid to face the world, hard as it is to the old. I shall get a few odd jobs to do among the poor folks, I daresay, even without a character, and I shall be able to rub along somehow."

Thus refusing Lucius's proffered aid, Mr. Wincher put on his hat and went out. Lucius went into the room which contained the chief part of Mr. Sivewright's collection, and waited there with the door open until Mr. Wincher's good lady should make her appearance, ready for departure.

He looked round at the chaotic mass of property wonderingly. How much had been plundered? The shabby old glass cases of china seemed full enough, yet who could tell how they had been thinned by the dexterous hand of one who knew the exact value of each separate object? It seemed hard that the fruit of Homer Sivewright's toil should have been thus lessened; it seemed strange that he, who was a professed cynic, should have so entirely trusted his old servant, only to be victimised by him at last.

Mrs. Wincher made her appearance, after an interval of about half an hour, laden with three bundles of various shapes and sizes, but all of the simplest description, two handboxes, an ancient and dilapidated umbrella, a small collection of hard ware in a hamper without a lid, a faded Paisley shawl across her arm, a bottle-green cloth cloak of antediluvian shape and style, and sundry small oddments in the way of pattens, a brown-crockery tea-pot, a paste-board, and a pepperbox.

"They're our few little comforts, sir," she said apologetically, as divers of these minor objects slid from her grasp and rolled upon the stone floor of the hall. "I suppose if we was sent to Newgate as prisoners we shouldn't be allowed to have 'em; but as there's no crime brought against us yet"—with profoundest irony—"I've took the liberty to bring 'em. Perhaps you'd like to look through my bundles, Dr. Davory, to make sure as there's none of the bricklebrack hidden amongst my good gentleman's wardrobe."

"No, thank you, Mrs. Wincher. I won't trouble you to open your bundles," answered Lucius, whose keen eye had taken note of the manner of goods contained in those flabby envelops.

Thus absolved from the necessity of exhibiting these treasures, Mrs. Wincher built them up in a neat pyramid by the side of the hall-door, with infinite pains, as if the monument were intended to be permanent, and then seated herself meekly on the lowest step of the staircase.

"I suppose as there's no objections to my resting my pore feet a bit, Dr. Davory," she said plaintively, "though me and my good gentleman is dismissed."

"You are quite at liberty to rest yourself, Mrs. Wincher," replied Lucius. "But I don't mean to take my eye off you till you're out of this house," he added mentally.

He paced the hall and the room adjoining till the bell at the outer gate announced Mr. Wincher's return. Mrs. Wincher went to admit her lord and master, who presently appeared with a small truck or hand-barrow, in which, aided by his wife, he deposited the pyramid of goods and chattels, which process involved a good deal more careful fitting-in of curiously-shaped objects into odd corners. Everything, however, having been finally adjusted to the satisfaction of both parties, Mr. Wincher reentered the house for the last time, while Mrs. Wincher waited on the steps, and delivered the keys to Lucius. Every key was neatly labelled with a slip of parchment, whereon was inscribed its number in Homer Sivewright's crabbed penmanship.

"Those are all the keys, sir, just as my master gave them to me when we first came here," said Mr. Wincher. "I've got a bit of a lodging. Perhaps you'd be kind enough to take down the address, as I should be glad to learn if ever you find out the real party that took the silver out of the chest, and likewise tampered with the medicine."

"If ever I find any evidence of your innocence you shall hear of it, Mr. Wincher," answered Lucius gravely. "What is the address?"

"Mrs. Hickett's, Crown-and-Anchor-alley, Bridge-street, sir; not a quarter of an hour's walk from here."

Lucius wrote the address in his pocket-book without another word.

This last duty performed the Winchers departed, and Lucius felt that he had taken the one step most likely to insure the safety of his patient.

"If not they, who else?" he said to himself, thinking of the arsenic in the medicine bottle.

He went once more to Lucille's room but hardly crossed the threshold. The sick girl was sleeping, and the nurse gave a very fair account

of her. He told Mrs. Milderson her duties—how she was to attend to Mr. Sivewright as well as to his grand-daughter, and told her furthermore how he had just dismissed the old servants.

"I am going in search of some one to take their place," he said, having made up his mind upon that head some time ago.

He went round the lower part of the house, tried all the keys, saw that all the doors were secured—those opening on the garden bolted and barred as firmly as if they had belonged to a besieged citadel. He looked through all the labels, but found no key to the staircase door up-stairs; a circumstance that annoyed him, as he had a particular desire to examine those rooms on the top story. Then, having made all safe, he went out, locking the hall-door and the iron gate after him, and proceeded straightway to Mr. Otranto's office.

Here he told that functionary exactly what he had done. Mr. Otranto chewed the end of his pen, and smiled upon his client with the calm smile of intellectual superiority.

"Now, I daresay you think you've been and gone and done a very clever thing," he said, when Lucius had unbosomed himself; "but I can just tell you you're on the wrong tack—a good hundred knots out of your course. That old party isn't in the robbery; and as to the pison, it's not for me to argue with a professional gent like you; no sorter should alter his crepidam, as we say in the Classics; but I wouldn't mind laying even money that the pison is only your fancy. You've been worriting yourself about this blessed business till you've got nervous, so you goes and sniffs at the physic, and jumps at the conclusion that it's pisoned."

"I have not jumped at any conclusion," replied Lucius. "My opinion is supported by an infallible test."

He told Mr. Otranto that he wanted to find a thoroughly honest man and woman, who would take the place of the Winchers at Cedar House—a man who would act as night watchman, and a woman who would perform such trifling domestic duties as were needed. Mr. Otranto, who had minions of all kinds at his beck and call, did know of just such a couple—an ex-policeman, who had left the force on account of an accident that had lamed him, and a tidy body, ex-policeman's wife. If Mr. Davoren wished, they should be at Cedar House in two hours' time.

"Let them meet me at the gate at three o'clock," said Lucius. "I must go round among my patients in the mean while."

His day's work still waited to be done, and it was long past twelve—dinner-time in the Shad-rack district. He had to endure reproachful looks from some of his patients, but bore all with perfect good-temper, and did his very best for all. Happily the people believed in him, and were grateful for all the good he had done among them.

At three o'clock he was at the iron gate, where he found Mr. Magsby, the ex-policeman, and his wife—a comfortable-looking young woman with a bundle and a baby, for which latter encumbrance Lucius had not bargained, and for which Mrs. Magsby duly apologised.

"Which Mr. Otranter may not have told you, sir, as I couldn't leave the baby behind, but she's as good a little dear as ever drew breath, and never cries, and in a large house, will be no ill-convenience."

"Perhaps not, if she never cries," said Lucius, "but if she does cry, you must smother her, rather than let her voice be heard up-stairs." And then he touched the small cheek kindly with his finger, and smiled upon the little one, after a fashion which at once won Mrs. Magsby's heart.

Mr. Magsby's lameness was little more than a halt in his walk, and, although sufficient to disable him as a public servant, was no hindrance to him as a night-watchman. Altogether Lucius decided that the Magsbys would do. He inducted them in the gloomy old kitchen and the room with the presses, where Mr. and Mrs. Wincher's turn-up bedstead yawned disconsolate and empty, and where there were such bits of humble furniture as would suffice for the absolute needs of life.

Mrs. Magsby pronounced the apartments roomy and commodious, but somewhat wanting in cheerfulness. "But me and Magsby have took care of all manner of houses," she added with resignation, "and we can make ourselves comfortable a'most anywhere, purvided we've a bit o'firing to bile the kettle for our cup o' tea and a mouthful of victuals."

Lucius showed Mr. Magsby the premises—the door opening upon the hidden staircase, all the ins and outs of the place, and told him what was expected of him.

After this induction of the Magsbys, he went up-stairs and saw Lucille. She was awake, but her mind still wandered. She looked at him with a far-off unrecognising gaze that went to his heart, and murmured some broken sentence in which the name of "father" was the only word he could distinctly hear.

"Pray to our Father in heaven, dearest," said Lucius, tenderly supporting the weary head, which moved so restlessly upon the pillow. He is the only Father who never wrongs His children; in whose love and wisdom we can believe, come weal, come woe."

He stayed by the bedside a little while, gave his instructions to Mrs. Milderson, and then went to the other sick-room.

Here he found Mr. Sivewright, fretful and impatient, but decidedly improved since the suspension of the medicine; a fact which that gentleman dwelt upon in a somewhat cynical spirit.

"You may remember that at the beginning of our acquaintance I professed myself a sceptic with regard to medical science," he said with his harsh laugh, "and I cannot say that my experience even of your skill has been calculated to conquer my prejudices. You are a very good fellow, Lucius, but the only effect of your medicines for the last month or so has been to make me feel nearer death than ever I felt before. I seem to be twice the man I was since I left off that confounded tonic of yours."

"I am very glad to hear it—not glad that the tonic has failed, but that you are better. Try to believe in me a little, however, in spite of this, and take the medicine which I will bring you this evening with my own hands."

The patient gave a faint groan.

"Your medicines make me ill," he said;

"I'll take no more of them."

"So be it," answered Lucius. "I told you from the first that in your case I depended upon repose and good diet more than upon drugs. We will see what nature unassisted will do."

"Have you sent away those thieves?"

"Mr. and Mrs. Wincher? Yes, they are gone."

"So ends three-and-twenty years' service! And I thought them faithful!" said Mr. Sivewright with a sigh. "And by what models of honesty have you replaced these traitors?"

Lucius explained his arrangements, to which Mr. Sivewright gave but doubtful approval.

He inquired anxiously about Lucille, and seemed grieved to find that she was too ill to come to him as usual.

"Though for these many years past I have doubted the existence of any relationship between us, she has made herself dear to me somehow, in spite of myself. God knows I have tried to shut my heart against her. When my son abandoned me, I swore never to care for any living creature—never again to subject myself to the anguish that an ingrate can inflict."

CHAPTER XIII.

HOW GEOFFREY ENJOYED THE GARDEN PARTY.

WHILE Lucius Davoren was thus occupied at the east end of London, Geoffrey Hossack was making the best of an existence which he had made up his mind to consider utterly joyless, so long as adverse fate denied him the one desire of his heart. For him in vain warm August skies were deeply blue, and the bosky dells and glades of the New Forest still untouched by autumn's splendid decay. For him vainly ran the bright river between banks perfumed with wild flowers. He beheld these things from the lofty standpoint of discontent, and in his heart called Nature a poor creature.

"I would rather be mewed up in Whitecross-street prison, or in the Venetian Piombi, with Janet for my wife, than enjoy all that earth can give of natural beauty or artificial splendor without her," he said to himself, when his cousins had bored him into a misanthropical mood by their insistence upon the charms of rural life, as exemplified at Hillersdon Grange.

"I'm afraid you have no soul for nature," said Belle, when she had kept Geoffrey on his feet for an hour in the cramped old-fashioned hot-houses, where she went in desperately for fern and orchids, and imitated Lady Baker on a small scale.

"I'm afraid not—for nature in flower-pots," answered Geoffrey, with an unsympathetic yawn. "I daresay these Calceolarias, and Gymnadenia, and what's-its-names are very grand, but I've seen finer growing wild in the valleys on the southern side of the Rocky Mountains. You English people only get nature in miniature—a poor etiolated creature. You have no notion of the goddess Gea in her Titanic vigour, as she appears on 'the other side.'"

"Meaning America?" said Belle contemptuously, as if that western continent were something too vulgar for her serious consideration. The sun shone upon lady Baker's fête as gaily as if fine weather had been a matter as much within her ladyship's power of provision as the luncheon from Gunter's, or the costumes for the tableaux vivants. The lady herself was radiant as the sunlight. Everybody had come—everybody worth receiving, at any rate. She gave Geoffrey a smile of particular cordiality as she shook hands with him, and murmured the conventional "How good of you to come early!"

Belle and Dessie were speedily told off for croquet: a sport for which Geoffrey professed an unmitigated dislike, in a most churlish spirit his cousins thought. Thus released from attendance on these fair ones, he roamed the vast gardens at large, finding solitudes in that spacious domain, even on such a day as this. In these secluded walks—where he only occasionally encountered a stray couple engaged in that sentimental converse which he slangily denominated "spooning"—Mr. Hossack indulged his own thoughts, which also were of a spooney character. Here, he thought, Janet Davoren had been happy in the brief summer-tide of her life; here she had felt the first joys and pains of an innocent girlish love, and here, alas, had given that peerless blossom of the soul, a girl's first love, to a scoundrel. The thought of this filled him with a savage jealousy.

"I wish I had fired that shot out yonder instead of Lucius," he said to himself. "Egad, I'd have made sure my ball went through him. There should have been no shilly-shally about my fire."

Luncheon found Mr. Hossack more attentive to the various Rhine wines than to *pâté de foie*

gras or chicken-salad, or even the wants of the damsel who sat next him. He was out of humor with all the world. His artfully-worded advertisement had appeared several times, and had produced no response. He began to think the Fates were opposed to his happiness.

"I suppose if a man is pretty well provided for in the way of three-per-cent he must hope for nothing else from Fortune," he thought, as he punished her ladyship's cabinet hocks.

Luncheon over, Mr. Hossack conducted his damsel to the sunny greensward, where enthusiastic archers—seven-and-twenty ladies to five gentlemen—were stringing their Cupid bows for a grand match. Here he shunted her into the care of one of the five male archers, all of whom looked ineffably bored, and anon departed whither he cared not—anywhere, anywhere out of this world of luncheons, croquet, flirtation, and frivolity.

Wandering at random, he came by and by to an obscure outskirt of the Mardenholme grounds, given over to the cultivation of huge rhododendrons, where there was a little wicket-gate opening into a green lane. He made his escape from Mardenholme altogether by this gate, glad to get away from the polite world, as represented by the croquet-players and toxophilites, and above all by those exacting first cousins of his, Belle and Dessie.

The green lane was rustic and secluded, well sheltered from the westward sloping sun by spreading boughs of chestnut and sycamore, with here and there the grander bulk of an oak making an oasis of deep shadow in the afternoon sunlight. Altogether a pleasant lane, even for the indulgence of saddest thoughts.

It was on the side of a hill. Right and left of him stretched undulating meadow-land, small enclosures between those straggling unkempt hedges which make the glory of English landscape, and below, almost at his feet as it were, lay a little village nestling in a cup-shaped valley, so snugly sheltered by those gently-sloping meads, so fenced from north and east by those tall screens of foliage, that one might fancy the bleak winds of winter must roll high above those modest roofs, ruffling no leaf in those simple gardens; that hails and snows and frosts must waste their fury on the encircling hills, and leave this chosen nook unassailed; that even the tax-gatherer must forget its existence.

There were about half a dozen cottages, the perfection of rusticity—gardens running over with roses, beehives, honeysuckle; a village inn, so innocent and domestic of aspect that one would suppose nothing could be farther from the thoughts of its patrons than strong drink of any kind; a little high-shouldered old church, with a squat square tower and crumbly white-washed wall; a green burial-ground, that went up and down like the waves of the sea, overshadowed by two vast yews, whose never-withering foliage canopied those rustic graves from January to December.

There was a little patch of greensward in the midst of the houses, and some feet below the churchyard, no two edifices in this village being on the same level. Here a meditative donkey cropped the soft herbage at leisure, and here on the bosom of a crystalline pool swam half a dozen geese, untroubled by forebodings of Michaelmas.

It was altogether a deliciously rustic picture, and Geoffrey, for the first time since his return to Hampshire, felt reconciled to Nature.

"This is better than all the tigered orchids in Lady Baker's collection," he mused, as he perched himself on a stile and took out his cigar-case for a quiet smoke. "Why do great ladies cultivate lady's slippers and pitcher-plants when for less money they might surround themselves with model villages and happy peasantry? Has the rôle of Lady Bountiful gone quite out of fashion, I wonder?"

He lighted his cigar and meditated upon life in general, dreamily contemplating the cottages and wondering about their inmates, as he had often wondered about the inhabitants of the dull old houses in the dull old country towns. These cottages seemed above the ordinary level, cleaner, brighter, more prosperous-looking. He could not fancy wife-beating or any other iniquity going on within those homely plastered walls. Those twinkling diamond-paned lattices seemed transparent as a good man's conscience, and in most of these dwellings the outer door stood wide open, as if the inmates invited inspection. He could see an eight-day clock, a dresser decked out with many-coloured crockery ware, a little round table spread for tea, a cradle, a snug arm-chair, a wicker birdcage, a row of geranium pots—all the furniture of home. He felt that he had alighted upon a small Arcadia.

While he sat thus musing, slowly smoking, very loth to go back to the civilised world, pert country cousins, and tableaux vivants, and tepid ices, and classical music, and general inanity, the door of that solitary cottage whose interior did not invite inspection was suddenly opened, and a child came skipping out—a child who wore a broad-brimmed Leghorn hat, with long yellow tresses streaming beneath it, and a pretty holland pinafore, and displayed symmetrical legs clad in blue stockings—a child after the order of Mr. Millais.

Geoffrey made as if he would have fallen off the stile; the half-smoked cigar fell from his hand. For a few moments he sat transfixed and statue-like, and could only stare. Then, with a sudden rush, he darted across the little strip of green, and clasped this butterfly child in his arms.

"Why, it's my little Flossie!" he cried rapturously, smothering the small face with kisses,

which the little maiden received without a murmur. Had not Mr. Hossack endeared himself to her by all the arts of bribery and corruption, in the shape of costly French bonbons, *editions de luxe* of popular fairy tales and German hobgoblin stories, and mechanical white mice that ran across the floor, and mechanical mailcoaches that, on being wound up, rushed off at breakneck speed to nowhere in particular, and came to grief after a few headlong journeys? "It's my precious little Flossie! My darling, where's mamma?"

"Mamma, mamma!" screamed the child, looking back towards the cottage. "Come out and see who's come." And then, turning to Geoffrey again, she said with childhood's candid selfishness, "Have you brought me some more French bonbons in a box with a picture on the lid, like the last?"

"My sweet one, I ought to be provided with a box of that very description," replied Geoffrey, grasping the little maiden's hand and dragging her to the cottage; "but how could I anticipate such bliss as to find you here in this O-for-ever-to-be-sanctified-village?" cried the lover, coining a Germanic compound substantive in his rapture. "Is mamma in there? O, take me to her, darling, take me!"

Tableaux vivants, pert Cousins, Lady Baker, the claims of civilised society, all melted into thin air amidst the delight of this discovery. He was as unsophisticated as if he had been a Black-foot, brought up in the pathless hunting-grounds of the west.

"Take me to her, thou dearest child," he exclaimed; and the little one led him into the cottage garden, where the bees were humming in the sunset, the air sweet with roses and carnations, happy swallows twittering in the eyes.

Here, on the threshold of the cottage door, framed like a picture by the stout black timbers, stood that one woman whom his soul worshipped, tall, slender, lovely, like a goddess who for a little while deigned to walk this lower earth.

She looked at Geoffrey with a tender gladness, a wild surprise, opposite feelings curiously blended in the expression of that eloquent face.

"O, Janet," said he, "how could you be so cruel as to run away from me?"

"How could you be so unkind as to follow me?" she asked reproachfully.

"I have not followed you. 'Twas chance that led me here this afternoon. There is a providence kind to true lovers, after all. I did not follow you, Janet, but I was heartbroken by the loss of you. I went down to Stillmington to carry you what I dared to think good news."

"Good news!" she repeated wonderingly.

"Yes, the tidings of your freedom."

Janet's pale face grew a shade paler.

"Come in for a little while," she said; "we cannot stand here talking of such things. Flossie, run and play on the green, darling; I'll come to you presently. Now Mr. Hossack."

She led the way into the simple cottage room, spotlessly clean, and with that dainty brightness of furniture and whiteness of drapery which industrious hands can give to the humblest surroundings. It was a small square room, with two of its angles cut off by old-fashioned corner cupboards with shining glass doors, displaying the treasures of glass and china within. A dimly-covered sofa, a couple of basket-work arm-chairs, an ancient bureau of darkest mahogany, and a solid Pembroke table formed the chief furniture of the room. One of Flossie's fairy-tale books—Geoffrey's Gift—lay open upon the table, the mother's work box beside it. A bowl of cut flowers adorned the broad sill of the long low casement, and the afternoon sunlight was filtered through the whitest of dimity curtains. To Geoffrey this old room, with its low ceiling sustained by heavy black beams was perfectly delightful.

"Do you mean to tell me that my husband is dead?" asked Janet, when she had brought her visitor in and shut the door, looking him full in the face with grave earnest eyes.

Geoffrey quailed beneath that searching gaze. In this crisis, which involved the dearest wish of his heart, he had become the veriest child.

"Yes," he answered, "he is dead. It is a most extraordinary story, and as I have no evidence to prove my statement, you may be inclined to doubt me. Yet I pledge my honour—"

"I shall not doubt your honour," said Janet, with a superb smile, "but I may doubt your discretion. How do you know that my husband is dead?"

"I met him in America, and heard of his death there—heard it on the highest possible authority."

"You met him in America. Why did you not tell me that at Stillmington?"

"Because I had at that time no means of identifying Matchi, the man I met in the West, with Mr. Vandeleur. I have seen your husband's portrait within the last fortnight, and I can take my oath that Mr. Vandeleur and the man I knew in America are one and the same."

"Where could you see my husband's portrait?" asked Janet incredulously.

"Lady Baker showed me a photograph of a group in which you and Mr. Vandeleur both appear."

"Have you no other reason to suppose that this American traveller, whom you call Matchi, and my husband are the same, except the evidence of a photograph?" asked Janet, somewhat contemptuously. "What more common than an accidental resemblance between two men who are utter strangers to each other?"

"Not such a likeness as that which I am speaking of; nor is a genius for music the commonest thing in the world. The violin-playing of the man in the western pine-forest exactly

resembled that which Lady Baker described to me."

"What," cried Janet, with a wounded air, "you have been taking Lady Baker into your confidence?"

"Forgive me, Janet. I am bent upon bringing this matter to a happy issue. Lady Baker is your true friend. She bitterly reproaches herself for her part in bringing about your unhappy marriage; she went to Melksham in search of you, when she accidentally learned that Mr. Vandeleur had been seen there, and was deeply grieved at arriving too late to find you."

"She is very good," answered Janet with a sigh. "And now tell me about this man you met in America. Tell me everything, without reserve."

Without reserve; that would be rather difficult. Not for worlds—no, not even to secure his own happiness—could Geoffrey Hossack betray his friend.

He told his story as best he could; but in his fear of saying too much, stumbled a little over the details. Altogether the story had a garbled air, and before he came to the end he saw plainly enough that Janet was unconvinced.

"I can trust your truth," she said, looking at that frank honest face with her clear eyes, "but I cannot trust your judgment. You had but just recovered from a fever, in which your senses had been astray, when you heard of his death. He was shot, you say, in the forest. Who shot him?"

"I—I cannot tell you," faltered Geoffrey, in a cold perspiration.

This Janet understood to mean "I do not know."

"See how vague your information is," she exclaimed with an incredulous laugh. "You were told that he was shot, but you were not told who shot him; you were not told the motive of the murder. Even in the backwoods I suppose people do not shoot each other quite without motive."

Geoffrey stood before her dumfounded.

"Did you kill him yourself?" she asked, with a sudden flash of suspicion.

"No, I wish I had; there should have been no mistake about it then."

"Say no more, Mr. Hossack; this is a subject upon which you and I can hardly agree. When you can bring me direct and legal evidence of Mr. Vandeleur's death, I will believe it."

"And if I ever can do that—and from the manner of his death it is almost impossible—you will give me some reward for my fidelity—eh, Janet?"

"I will make no bargains," she answered gravely. "I beg you to hold yourself entirely free, and for the sake of your own happiness I trust you may speedily get rid of this boyish infatuation."

"Boys!" echoed Geoffrey, with the proud consciousness of his eight-and-twenty years. "Why I am your senior by two years. Lucius told me so."

"Sorrow does the work of time in some lives," said Janet with her sad smile; "I feel myself very old at six-and-twenty. Come, Mr. Hossack, you have been always very good to me, and for once in a way I will treat you as a friend. Little Flossie is very fond of you, and I know she is dying for a long talk about her new pets, the tame rabbits and the tortoiseshell kitten, whose acquaintance she has made down here. Stop and drink tea with us, and tell me how you happened to find me out in this quiet corner of the earth."

"You forget that we are not a mile from one of the gates of Mardenholme," said Geoffrey, enchanted at the prospect of drinking tea with his goddess.

"True; but I didn't think you knew Lady Baker."

"Didn't you?" said this Jesuit, in an artless tone. "Why, you see my people live down hereabouts—Hillersdon Grange—and my cousins and Lady Baker are uncommonly thick."

Mrs. Bertram called to little Mary through the open window. The child was walking up and down the little path by the beehives, nursing her tortoiseshell kitten. She came bounding in joyfully at this summons, and exhibited this feline treasure to Mr. Hossack, that good-natured individual allowing the small member of the tiger tribe to make a promenade upon his outstretched arm, and pur triumphantly from a lofty perch on his coat-collar.

Mrs. Bertram rang a little tinkling handbell, and a decent old woman—who must surely have been what is called "upon the listen," or she could hardly have heard that feeble summons—appeared with a tea-tray, and spread the neat little table with the best china teacups, a brown home-baked loaf, the yellowest of butter-pats, the richest of cream in a little glass jug, a great wedge of golden honeycomb, a few ripe apricots nestling in a bed of mulberry leaves,—a repast at once Arcadian and picturesque.

"But perhaps you may not care for such a womanish beverage as orange pekoe," said Janet doubtfully, as Mr. Hossack surveyed the banquet from his altitude of something over six feet, the kitten still promenading his shoulder.

"Not care for tea! Why, on the shores of the Saskatchewan the teapot was our only comfort," exclaimed Geoffrey. "We had a cask or two of rum with us, and had no end of trouble in hiding it from the Indians; but they got the most of the fire-water out of us sooner or later, by hook or by crook. We rarely took any of it ourselves, except as a medicine. Travellers are a temperate race, I can assure you, Mrs. Bertram."

They sat down to tea, the kitten now perambulating the backs of their chairs, now sending forth appealing miaows for milk or other refreshment. Geoffrey, who had been too much out

of humour with the world in general to do justice to Lady Baker's luncheon, was ravenous, and devoured bread-and-honey like the queen in the nursery rhyme, of which Flossie did not fail to remind him. It was the first meal he had ever eaten with the woman he loved. That fragrant tea was more intoxicating than Lady Baker's choicest Johannisberger or Steinberger.

He forgot that he was perhaps no nearer a happy issue to his suit than he had been that day in the botanical gardens at Stillmington, when he made his first desperate appeal to his inexorable goddess; he forgot everything except the present moment—this innocent rustic interior, the fair-haired child, whose gay laugh rang out every now and then, the perambulatory kitten, the perfect face of the woman he loved, smiling at him with that proud slow smile he knew so well.

"So you went back to Stillmington," Janet said presently when Geoffrey had appeased the pangs of hunger with the contents of the honeycomb and the crustiest side of the home-baked loaf, and had consumed three cups of that exquisite tea.

"Went back!" repeated Geoffrey; "of course I went back. I should have gone back exactly the same if Stillmington had been in the centre of Africa, or on the top of Ormuzd. How cruel of you to leave no address! They told me you had gone to the sea-side."

"Well, I did not leave a very definite account of myself, certainly. You see I was so tired of Stillmington and of my pupils; and thanks to concert singing and pupils, I had contrived to save a little money. So, as my health was not quite so good as it might be—I had been working rather hard for the last few years, you see—I thought I would give myself a month or so of thorough rest. I had a fancy—amounting almost to an irresistible longing—to see my old home once more—the graves of those dear ones my ingratitude had wronged. I knew that to come back to the scenes of my girlhood would be the keenest suffering, yet I longed to come. I did not want to be very near Wykhamston, as that would be to run the risk of recognition; but I wished to be somewhere within the reach of the dear, dear old place. I thought of this village and of Sally, my kind old nurse, who came to live here in this cottage, which she had bought with her savings, when she left the Rectory. I was only fourteen when she left us; and one of our greatest treats—Lucius's and mine and the dear sister we lost—was to come here of a summer afternoon and drink tea with dear old Sally. So I said to myself, 'If God has spared my old nurse, I will go and ask her to give me a lodging;'" and Flossie and I came straight here—to this out-of-the-way corner—to take our holiday. Flossie has been enraptured with the rustic life, the pigs and fowls, and the old gray donkey on the green, with whom she has formed quite a friendship. She feeds him with bread-and-milk every morning, foolish child!"

She said this with the mother's tender look at the fair-haired damsel, who disposed of the bread-and-honey as fast as if she had laid a wager with Geoffrey as to which of them should devour most.

"And have you been happy here?" asked Geoffrey.

"Yes—after the first bitter pain of seeing my lost home, and remembering how I lost it, I have been happier than I had hoped ever to be again. After all, there is some magic in one's native air."

"Yes," exclaimed Geoffrey, with an air of conviction, "of course there is. I have a place in Hampshire myself not a stone's-throw, in a rural point of view—that is to say, five-and-twenty miles or so—from here. No end of arable and meadow-land, and copse and rabbit-warren, and some well-wooded ground about the house, which my father took the liberty to call a park; and a nice old house enough, of the Queen-Anne period; stiffish and squarish and reddish, but by no means a bad kind of barrack. I'll give the sugar-broker notice—no, I can't do that—I'll offer to buy back his lease to-morrow."

"The sugar-broker!" repeated Janet, perplexed.

"Yes, a fellow I was foolish enough to let my place to when I came of age—seven, fourteen, or twenty-one years. He's keeping it up uncommonly well, I'm told; has put up a good deal of glass in the kitchen-garden, and so on, and improved the farm-buildings. But he shall go. He's on for his fourteen years; so I can't give him notice to quit, but I can offer him a tempting price for the lease. I daresay he's tired of the place by this time. People always do get tired of their places."

"But what can you want with a great place like that?" asked Janet.

"I don't know. Didn't you say you were fond of this part of the country?" asked Geoffrey, in some confusion. Those cups of orange pekoe had proved far more intoxicating than the vintage of Rhineland.

"O, Mr. Hossack, pray do not let my fancies influence your life!" said Janet earnestly. "Remember we may never be more to each other than we are now,—very good friends, who may meet once in a way, at some chance turn in life's road."

Geoffrey pleaded his hardest, but felt that he was pleading in vain. All arguments were futile. Honour counselled Janet to be firm, and she was steadfast as a rock.

"I will not tell you that you are indifferent to me," she said, in her low sweet voice, unembarrassed by the presence of the child, who was absorbed in the antics of her kitten, and troubled herself in no manner about what Mr. Hossack might be saying to her mother, and presently,

having eaten to repletion, roamed out into the garden among the clove carnations and late roses and tall gaudy hollyhocks. "That would be too ungrateful, after all the trouble you have taken for my sake. I can only say that, until I have proof positive of my first husband's death, I shall continue to consider myself bound to him."

"But what stronger proof can you hope for than my assurance of the fact? Remember that Mr. Vandeleur perished in a solitude where there are no registrars to take note of a man's death, no coroner to hold an inquest on his body, no undertakers to give him decent burial; where a rough-and-ready grave under the pine-trees would be the sole witness of his end."

"We will trust in Providence, Mr. Hossack," answered Janet, with that steadfast look he knew so well, and which made her seem a creature so far above him—a being exempt from common temptations and human passions. "If my husband died as you tell me he died, I do not doubt that in due time there will arise some confirmation of your story."

Geoffrey sighed, and shrugged his shoulders.

"If the trunks of trees or the songless birds of the wilderness could talk, you might receive such confirmation," he said; "but from any other source it is impossible."

"Why, my brother was with you all the time, was he not?" inquired Janet, with a wondering look. "He at least must be able to vouch for the truth of your story."

Geoffrey grew deadly pale, and for a few moments was speechless.

"Unhappily," he faltered, after that awkward pause, "Lucius had a bad attack—brain fever, or apoplexy he called it—just at the time of this man's death. His evidence would therefore hardly satisfy you."

"In point of fact, Mr. Hossack, it seems that neither you nor my brother were in a condition to know anything about the event. You could have only hearsay evidence. Who was your informant?"

This question was a home-thrust. To name Lucius would have been almost to betray him; and again, he had just given her to understand that Lucius was unconscious at the time of the event. Again there came a pause, painfully awkward for Geoffrey. He felt that Mrs. Bertram was watching him with gravely questioning eyes. How was he to reply?

"There was a little Dutchman with us," he said at last, with a desperate plunge, knowing not how near to his friend's betrayal this admission might lead him; "a man called Schanck—Absalom Schanck—a very good fellow, who was with us—our fellow-traveller. I—I think you must have heard me speak of him. He saw the shot fired."

"And saw my husband die?"

"Yes," answered Geoffrey, but not with perfect conviction; "I believe so."

"And pray where is Mr. Schanck? His evidence may be worth very little, but it would be as well to hear it."

"Upon my word," said Geoffrey, crestfallen, "I'm afraid that at this present moment Schanck is washing gold in San Francisco, unless he has been made mincemeat of by larger diggers."

"We must wait for some other witness then," said Janet, in a tone of calm certainty, which made reply seem impossible.

Geoffrey could but submit. He must needs obey this lovely image of destiny.

"So be it," he said, with a despairing sigh; "but you will let me come to see you sometimes—won't you, Janet?" very tenderly and evidently expecting a reproof; instead of which his devotion was rewarded with a smile. "And you'll receive me just as you have done this afternoon, and give me a cup of that delicious Pekoe?"

"A cup!" exclaimed Janet; "I think you had five."

"I may come to tea again, mayn't I, once in three weeks or so, like a boy who has a Saturday afternoon at home? Flossie likes me, you see," pleaded he hesitantly.

"Well, you may come once a month, or so, if you happen to be in the neighbourhood."

"Happen to be in the neighbourhood! I would cross the Balkan range in January to obtain such a privilege."

"But remember you come only as my friend. If you talk to me as you have talked this afternoon, I shall ring for Sally, and tell her to show you to the door. It would be only a formula—as the street-door opens out of this room—but I should do it nevertheless."

"There shall not be one word that can offend you."

"On that condition you may come; but, believe me, your own happiness would be better secured by your utter forgetfulness of a woman who may never be free the reward of your fidelity. There are so many who would be proud of such a lover. Amongst them your might surely find one who would realise your ideal as well as, if not better than, I."

"Never!" protested Geoffrey, with warmth. "I never knew what a great love was till I knew you. I will never open my heart to a lesser love."

Janet gave a little sigh, half regret, half satisfaction. After all, a woman does not easily relinquish such devotion. She has a duty to fulfil, and her little lecture, her few words of wise counsel, to pronounce; and having done that duty, she is hardly sorry if her foolish adorer refuses to hear.

So they parted—not briefly, for little Flossie hung about Geoffrey, and impeded his departure; nay, at his and Flossie's joint request, Janet walked half the length of the lane with

Geoffrey and the child. They only parted within sight of the distant towers of Mardenholme.

"How pleased Lady Baker would be if she knew you were so near!" said Geoffrey.

"Pray, don't tell her. She was very good to me, and I was fond of her; but she would want me to go to that great house of hers, full of strange faces, and sing to her company, and be made a show of. I have contrived to keep very clear of her pathway so far, near as I am. Pray, do not betray me."

"To hear is to obey. But you really do mean to stay here?" inquired Geoffrey anxiously. "When I come a month hence to claim that cup of Pekoe, I sha'n't find you fled, eh?"

"I promise that if anything should induce me to leave Foxley—that's the name of our little village—I will write you a line to say were I am going. But my present intention is to stay here till November—just long enough for a thorough rest—and go back to my pupils at Stillington."

Geoffrey sighed. The thought of those sol-fa classes, and the hard labour they involved, always smote him to the quick; and he was rioting in the Three per cents, as he told himself.

"He took his time in returning to Mardenholme; and the tableaux vivants had begun when he pushed his way in among the crowd of young men standing at the back of the picture-gallery, Lady Baker having naturally invited a good many more guests than could find even standing room. Here he stood patiently enough, and saw as much of the living pictures after Frith, Faed, and Millais as he could conveniently behold above the heads of the crowd in front of him. He was not deeply interested in the performance, his mind indeed being rather occupied with tender recollections of the humble tea-party at which he had lately assisted than by the charms of the graceful young lady who danced with Claude Duval, or of the pretty peasant lassie, with her shepherd's plaid and neatly-snooded hair, or the damsel in white satin, who parted unwillingly with her Black Brunswicker under the glare of the lime-light. He applauded mechanically when other people applauded, and felt that he had done all that society could expect of him. His cousins came out presently among the crowd, and straightway pounced upon him, and reproached him with acrimony.

"Why, Geoffrey, where have you been hiding yourself?" asked Belle.

"I've been strolling about the gardens a little," replied that arch hypocrite. "It's rather warm in here."

"Rather warm!" exclaimed Dessie, who was evidently out of temper. "It's insufferably hot, and I'm tired to death. These tableaux are a mistake after a garden-party. Lady Baker always tries to do too much. One feels so dowdy, too, in morning-dress when the lamps are lighted. But, pray, how have you managed to keep out of everybody's way all the afternoon, Geoffrey? I haven't set eyes on you since luncheon."

"I hope you haven't been looking for me all the time," said Geoffrey, with unruffled coolness. "I've been meandering about the grounds, enjoying nature."

"Which I thought was not worth looking at in England," remarked Belle. "But perhaps, now we have found you," with angry emphasis, "you'll be kind enough to get us some refreshment. I daresay you have had something, but I know I am ready to sink."

"Yes, I've done pretty well, thanks. I had some bread-and-honey."

"Bread-and-honey!" cried Dessie.

"O, that's to say, something in that way. Your sweets and kickshaws are all the same to me—I never know what to call them. Come along, Belle, we'll fight our way to the refreshment-room. You sha'n't sink if I can help it."

He piloted the two damsels through the crowd to a large room, which had been arranged after the model of a railway refreshment-buffet, save that it was liberally furnished with things good to eat. Here Lady Baker's men and maids dispensed strawberry ices, tea, coffee, Italian confectionery, German wines and German salads, to the famishing crowd; and here Geoffrey, by cramming them with ices, and creamy vanilla-flavoured pastry, contrived to restore his cousins' equanimity. There was some talk of dancing, and a few enthusiastic couples were already revolving in the drawing-room; but Geoffrey pleaded that no man could waltz in grey trousers, and thus escaped the infliction; and having the good fortune to find his uncle, tired of vestry and quarter-session talk and inclined to go home, this heartless young man had the satisfaction of packing Belle and Dessie into the landau before Lady Baker's fête was half over, as Dessie said discontentedly.

They avenged themselves by abusing the party all the way home.

"Those huge garden-parties are detestable!" exclaimed Belle. "I know Lady Baker only gives them in order to be civil to a herd of people she doesn't care a straw about. She gives nice little parties for her real friends. I wonder people can be so slavish as to go to her in droves."

"I thought you said Lady Baker's parties were delightful," said Geoffrey. "I know you wrote to me rapturously about her."

"I'm only just beginning to see through her," replied Belle, who couldn't get over the day's annoyances. This tiresome Geoffrey had not been the least good to them. He might just as well have been in Norway.

(To be continued.)

A LOVE CONFIDENCE.

Some years ago, at one of Dr. Y's *soirées* at Paris, I met a gentleman whose name was not O'Sullivan, but whom, for the sake of concealment, I shall so designate. I had never seen him before, nor were we upon that occasion introduced to each other, but this ceremony he soon rendered needless by introducing himself.

"I beg ten thousand pardons, sir; if I am not greatly mistaken, your name is Fiddkins." (I take the same privilege of concealment, under an assumed name, as I have allowed to my new friend.)

"Fiddkins is my name."

"I beg ten thousand pardons again, sir; but if I am not greatly mistaken, you have lately published a novel called 'The Scheming Lover.'" (My novel, like my friend and myself, travels *incog.*)

"I have."

"Why, then, sir, upon my honor and conscience, that is a mighty pretty thing to be able to say."

He smiled, bowed, and withdrew, and I was much amused at the oddity of the proceeding. Late in the evening, at Mr. O'Sullivan's especial request, Dr. Y. "favored" him with a formal introduction to me.

On the following morning, at an hour much earlier than is usual for paying visits of ceremony, my servant brought in Mr. O'Sullivan's card, with Mr. O'Sullivan's most earnest request that I would grant him a quarter of an hour's interview.

The rule being granted, as a lawyer would say, the gentleman entered; and after exhausting no inconsiderable portion of his time in preparatory "hems" and "haws," he thus began:

"I beg ten thousand pardons, sir, I am the most unfortunate of existing creatures, and I come to beg your kind assistance. I have the misfortune, sir, to be most miserably in—"

"Debt," I expected he would have added, and accordingly made the most amiable preparations for expressing "my regret at my utter inability," etc.; but he continued—

"Love."

It is astonishing with what celerity the sluices of our sympathy are opened, and how copious is the stream when it is not required to flow backward.

"Sir," said I, "I should be happy to be serviceable to you in any manner in the world; but it really seems to me that in a case of this nature—"

"Pardon me, sir, but that is the very thing; you are the very person of all others to assist me. As I said, sir, I am most awfully in love; but unluckily, sir, I—I am bashful."

"And so, sir, you come to borrow a little of my superfluous impudence? I am flattered by the compliment."

"Don't misunderstand me, sir—pray don't. No, sir; the case is this—your book is full of love schemes (and upon my honor and conscience, very clever they are), but it so happens there is not one among them that will suit my particular case."

"Well, Mr. O'Sullivan, have the kindness to state your case, and if I can be of any service to you, I will."

"Why, then, sir, in the first place, the lady is a widow—she's thirty-five, or thereabouts, which is no great disparity between us, as I am thirty-two."

"Is the lady handsome?"

"Why that's a mere matter of taste; but—why, yes, in my eyes, she—I think is handsome. But now for the difficulty—she has eight hundred a year of her own."

"A difficulty, perhaps, but surely no objection, Mr. O'Sullivan?"

"Why, yes, it is. If I propose to her, people will say it is for the dirty lucre; when, if you could read my heart, Mr. Fiddkins, you'd see that—besides, have I not eight hundred a year of my own—in Ireland—setting aside for the last three years the rent that won't come in; so as for her money, you see—but to make an end, sir, I am cruelly in love with her, and if she won't marry me, I'll die."

"But it seems you have not proposed to the lady. Now it strikes me that, as a preliminary step, you should do so; at least you should sound her affections, for should they be engaged in another quarter—"

"Don't talk of that, sir; the very thought of that drives me mad. But I'll follow your advice; I'll see her to-day, and, should she refuse me, let nobody think I'll live any longer."

On the following day he came to me again; the upshot of his interview with the lady had been a flat rejection.

Upon many subsequent occasions he repeated his address, invariably with a similar effect; and upon each occasion I received the honor of his confidence, together with the alarming assurance that at length his heart was broken, and that for him the sun had risen for the last time.

It was in vain that I remonstrated with him on the folly of indulging a hopeless passion, and that I endeavored to persuade him to try, by a change of scene, to forget the cruel fair one—to quit Paris and go to Rome or Nova Scotia, or to carry out a stock of pigs, paupers and poultry, and colonize some new discovered land. His parting phrase still—"Tis all of no use; she won't marry me; I'm the most miserable of earth's creatures, and now I'll die."

Business suddenly called me to England. I had neither seen nor heard of, and had almost forgotten "the most miserable of earth's creatures," when one day, about two years and a half afterwards, as I was going along Pall Mall, I met

him. He came up to me, and shaking me violently by the hands, exclaimed:

"My dear sir—my dear friend—at last I see you again. This is the happiest moment I have enjoyed for many a day! You remember that unhappy attachment of mine! I was the most miserable man alive then! I'm a million times more miserable now!"

"For shame, Mr. O'Sullivan," said I, "be a man, and forget her."

"Is it forget her you say? And how the devil will I forget her; when we've been married these two years, and the devil a sixpence has she got any more than myself?"

DON MUNIO SANCHE DE HINOJOSA.

In old times, several hundred years ago, there was a noble Castilian cavalier named Don Munio Sancho de Hinojosa, lord of a border castle, which had stood the brunt of many a Moorish foray. He had seventy horsemen as his household troops, all of the ancient Castilian proof; stark warriors, hard riders, and men of iron; with these he scoured the Moorish lands, and made his name terrible throughout the borders. His castle hall was covered with banners and cimiers and Moslem helmets, the trophies of his prowess. Don Munio was, moreover, a keen huntsman, and rejoiced in bounds of all kinds, steeds for the chase, and hawks for the towering sport of falconry. When not engaged in warfare, his delight was to beat up the neighboring forests—and scarcely ever did he ride forth without hound and horn, a boar spear in his hand or a hawk upon his fist, and an attendant train of huntsmen.

His wife, Donna Maria Palacin, was of a gentle and timid nature, little fitted to be the spouse of so hardy and adventurous a knight; and many a tear did the poor lady shed when he sallied forth upon his daring enterprises, and many a prayer did she offer up for his safety.

As this doughty cavalier was one day hunting, he stationed himself in a thicket, on the borders of a green glade of the forest, and dispersed his followers to rouse the game and drive it toward his stand. He had not been here long when a cavalcade of Moors, of both sexes, came prancing over the forest lawn. They were unarmed, and magnificently dressed in robes of tissue and embroidery, rich shawls of India, bracelets and anklets of gold, and jewels that sparkled in the sun.

At the head of this gay cavalcade rode a youthful cavalier, superior to the rest in dignity and loftiness of demeanor, and in splendor of attire; beside him was a damsel, whose veil, blown aside by the breeze, displayed a face of surpassing beauty, and eyes cast down in maiden modesty, yet beaming with tenderness and joy.

Don Munio thanked his stars for sending him such a prize, and exulted at the thought of bearing home to his wife the glittering spoils of these infidels. Putting his hunting horn to his lips, he gave a blast that rung through the forest. His huntsmen came running from all quarters, and the astonished Moors were surrounded and made captives.

The beautiful Moor wrung her hands in despair, and her female attendants uttered the most piercing cries. The young Moorish cavalier alone retained self-possession. He inquired the name of the Christian knight who commanded this troop of horsemen. When told that it was Don Munio Sancho de Hinojosa, his countenance lighted up. Approaching that cavalier and kissing his hand, "Don Munio Sancho," said he, "I have heard of your fame as a true and valiant knight, terrible in arms, but schooled in the noble virtues of chivalry. Such do I trust to find you. In me you behold Abadil, son of a Moorish alcaid. I am on the way to celebrate my nuptials with this lady; chance has thrown us in your power; but I confide in your magnanimity. Take all our treasure and jewels; demand what ransom you think proper for our persons, but suffer us not to be insulted or dishonored."

When the good knight heard this appeal, and beheld the beauty of the youthful pair, his heart was touched with tenderness and courtesy. "God forbid," said he, "that I should disturb such happy nuptials. My prisoners in troth shall ye be for fifteen days, and immured within my castle, where I claim the right of celebrating your espousals."

So saying, he despatched one of his fleetest horsemen in advance, to notify Donna Maria Palacin of the coming of this bridal party, while he and his huntsmen escorted the cavalcade, not as captives, but as a guard of honor. As they drew near to the castle, the banners were hung out and the trumpets sounded from the battlements, and on their nearer approach, the drawbridge was lowered, and Donna Maria came forth to meet them, attended by her ladies and knights, her pages and her minstrels. She took the young bride, Alifra, in her arms, kissed her with the tenderness of a sister, and conducted her into the castle. In the mean time, Don Munio sent forth missives in every direction, and had viands and dainties of all kinds collected from the country round; and the wedding of the Moorish lovers was celebrated with all possible state and festivity. For fifteen days the castle was given up to joy and revelry. There were tiltings and jousts at the ring, and bull-fights, and banquets, and dances to the sound of minstrelsy. When the fifteen days were at an end, he made the bride and bridegroom magnificent presents and conducted them and their attendant safely beyond the borders. Such, in old times, were the courtesy and generosity of a Spanish cavalier.

THE TRIBULATIONS OF A COUPLE OF RURAL LOVERS.

The other night at Truckee, Cal., two young men, visiting the same young lady, tried to "freeze each other out," or in other words, to see which would stay the longest. It appears that this is a common amusement at Truckee, and though perhaps pleasant to the young men, is somewhat expensive and annoying to the old folks. The *Republican* tells the story as follows:

The heads of the family left the young people alone at the proper time and retired, apparently for the purpose of rest and slumber. About midnight the young lady expressed a desire to step out on the porch to see the moon and get the fresh air, and of course both of the "freezers" followed. The door was closed after them. While moon and star gazing, the man of the house steps unobserved into the parlor and distributes a liberal supply of shoemakers' wax on two of the seats of the cane-bottomed chairs—those that the men had vacated. This wax was of the right consistency to serve the purpose in this case. The young lady on the porch, who was in the secret, soon found an excuse for returning with her admirers. The young men sank down again into the "reserved seats," and each redoubled his efforts to please the damsel, annoy his fellow, and keep awake. About an hour passed in this way, by which time the wax, aided by the warmth pressing down upon it, had become thoroughly amalgamated with the shoddy of the pants—in fact, the cane bottoms of the chair, the wax and the pantaloons became a sort of inseparable trinity. The time for the crisis was close at hand. It came. Each one of the bachelors found himself glued to his seat, and no amount of pulling and tugging effected a release. If they arose the chairs followed. At first they tried to look upon the matter as a joke, but after a full half hour's struggle to free themselves from their embarrassing predicament, they began to think they had got into a serious scrape. The lady suggested that they build up a rousing fire in the stove, and then each man, backing up as near the heat as possible, "melt the darned stuff off," as she said. This method was tried, but didn't work, as with the chairs fastened to them they couldn't get near enough to the fire. After they had sweat in the heated room for about an hour to no purpose, the wax retaining its relentless grip and connection, they saw no other way out of their awkward dilemma except to engage in a surgical operation. It was getting along toward morning, and daylight was near at hand. They realised that whatever was to be done must be done quickly. Their jack-knives were brought into requisition, and in a few minutes each fellow was released from his uncomfortable position. They left the young lady and the house in a hasty and unceremonious manner, with a cane patch on the rear of their unmentionables about the size of a full moon. Freeze-out games are not as popular as they were.

CURIOSITIES OF SUPERTITIONS.

Louis Napoleon in his will emphasises the solemn declaration: "With regard to my son, let him keep as a talisman the seal I used to wear attached to my watch." This piece of fetishism would appear to have formed yet another link between the imperial exile that has passed from our midst and those Latin races whose cause he affected to represent, whose superstition he certainly shared. Indeed, the ancient Romans degraded a priest because his mitre fell, and unmade a dictator because a rat squeaked. Caesar crossed the Rubicon, because, on the opposite bank, he saw a man with a fine figure. His nephew felt confident of winning the battle of Actium, because he met a peasant of the name of Nicolaus mounted on an ass. Wolsey was warned of his doom by a crosier-head; Sejanus, by a flight of crows. Dr. Johnson objected to going under a ladder. Montaigne avoided giving his left foot priority in putting on his stockings. Alexander was believed to have untied the Gordian knot with a slice of his sword. For good luck's sake, Augustus wore some portion of a sea-calf; Charlemagne, some trinket of unknown value. * * No doubt there was a deal of imposture in alchemy; no doubt, too, the wish for gold was father to the thought of alchemy; but this in itself will not account for Henry IV. prohibiting alchemy, for God-fearing Henry VI. eagerly encouraging it; for Pope John XXII. being an alchemist; for Louis XIII. of France making a Franciscan monk his grand-almoner, as the reward of a hundred years' reign promised to his credulity by that pretender to the discovery of the grand elixir; or for Jean de Lisle expiating by an early death in the Bastille his bold attempts to persuade Louis XIV. and his ministers that he possessed the gold-making stone. Among the wide circle of influential believers that alchemy thus entranced were Roger Bacon, Albertus Magnus, and St. Thomas Aquinas; and even the transcendent intellects of Leibnitz, Spinoza, and Verulam. However, in the pursuit of this phantom, Roger Bacon casually stumbled on the composition of gunpowder; Geber, on the properties of acids; Van Helmot, on the nature of gas; and spirit; and Dr. Glauber of Amsterdam, on the uses of the salt which bears his name. Thus was the alchemist the victim of fetishism, the slave of superstition, the worshipper of science, the conqueror of power.

The Ladies' Page.

THE FASHIONS.

The fashions for autumn and winter are fully determined; the long-desired and long-promised return to a certain simplicity in ornamentation is partly effected. The absence of superfluous trimming from suits destined to be worn in all kinds of weather and in all conditions of city streets, is a sensible and artistic modification of past styles. Nothing that is unfit is artistic; and nothing that can be more unfit than elaborate out-door dressed in the season of mud and slush.

There is certainly a groping after something comfortable, and at the same time attractive, in feminine attire; and it is for this reason, as much as for the love of variety, that the fashions are subject to perpetual changes. The groping, rather blind as yet, sometimes produces singular results: but it is always tending toward the objective point—a dress as well suited to the ordinary requirements of women as the dress of men is to their sex, and which shall be obnoxious to as few modifications.

THE REDINGOTE.—When it first appeared last Spring, was hailed as the coming garment. Nothing half so comfortable, so easy to make, so generally becoming, has been produced for years, and the designer of it—it is hardly questionable that it must have been the choice of a woman—deserves well of her kind. Having run through summer as the odd garment of a wardrobe, it has now assumed the chief position as the upper portion of a walking suit. Few costumes are made without it; the variations being a single skirt with long polonaise basque, and a few with over-skirt and basque. The redingote has scarcely changed at all thus far; it is finished either with a two-inch hem, or bias band piped on the upper edge, as it has been since the beginning. The two rows of big buttons and the bound button-holes are still its only trimming in front, but it is frequently made with two biases now, rendering it nearly, if not quite, tight fitting. The sash looped on the left side is as often dispensed with as used, and a plain belt, clasping in front instead of behind, is regarded as the most elegant finish. When the redingote belongs to a suit, buttons covered with the same, or with silk to match, are proper. But when it is made of blue waterproof, diagonal cloths, ladies' cloth or any of the numerous heavy fabrics intended for it, and designed to wear with any skirt; then buttons of silver, jet and oxydized metals are admissible. Now and then a redingote is seen with a ruff in the neck instead of a coat collar; but it is so positive a mixture of styles—the eminently drawing-room air of the one being so totally at variance with the uncompromisingly outdoorishness of the other—that the experiment is not likely to become a fashion.

The severe aspect of the redingote, of course, admits of no coquetry in the remainder of the toilet. The skirt which accompanies it should be simple, and generally is. The new walking skirts, are shorter and scater than heretofore. The French models barely touch the ground behind, and do not measure more than three yards and a half round the extreme edge. French ladies who, as compared with our women scarcely walk at all still have so great a horror of soil that they never drag their gowns over filthy sidewalks, even in their briefest promenades. A skirt designed for walking is cut with reference to its use and not permitted to perform half the duty of the street-sweeper. Undoubtedly we got our fashion of trailing skirts from Paris, but it was a fashion designed for the American market, supposed to be as extreme in the matter of modes as of banners. Trimmings most attractive on the French suits are invariably flat; full ruffles, flounces, puffings, etc., having seemingly taken a long leave. One of the very prettiest costumes that has been shown is trimmed like this: an eight-inch straight side-plaited flounce at the bottom, headed by a bias fold six inches wide, piped with velvet on the upper edge. Above this is a space half the width of the fold and then a second fold. The over-skirt—four yards of the silk, hollowed in the middle, on one edge, to fit over the figure in front, and gathered into the belt behind—is finished with a similar fold; the ends being turned over behind to form a broad sash. The waist is a half-fitting jacket with square tabs behind, and rounded basque in front. The tabs are trimmed with flat velvet bands and a velvet vest, instead of being laid on flatly, is cut in the form of long revers, lined with silk, and held back by a row of buttons on either side, which are joined by loops of silk cord, similar to frogs. Nothing can be simpler, and nothing that we have seen, prettier than this costume.

Flat folds, piped or plain, of all widths and designs, promise to be the favorite trimming of dress material. Side plaitings, kilt plaitings, box-plaited flounces and flat shell trimming are also used, but less frequently. Passementerie in silk and worsted, hand embroidery, gimps of silk and mingled with jet and steel, fringes of all kinds, heavy braids, like the old Hercules, flat bands of velvet, velvet ribbon, &c., are desirable and expensive trimmings. The hope that with simpler dresses would come cheaper prices is futile. The cost of the extra fabric used formerly for decoration is fully equalled by the dearthness of the imported ornaments in vogue at present. Plainness and economy may sometimes be synonymous—they are not now.

DRESSES.—Other dresses, such as are for home, dinner, and evening, are very models of simplicity. For them the overskirt is abandoned; but its absence is hardly perceptible in the multiplicity of embellishment. Demitains have taken the place of full trains for every occasion except the extreme of full dress, and then are as often seen as not seen. That this is much more convenient and graceful than the wastes of silk and satin, which the most skilful can scarcely manage in a crowded room, will hardly be denied. It takes a great deal less, also, to cut and trim a demi-train than it does a full one, which is a more practical but an equally positive advantage. The combining of two or three materials and as many shades is the favorite method; and silk, satin and lace silk velvet and cashmere, and other mixtures are seen on every hand. Two shades of one color seem to be more favorably regarded than two colors, possibly because it is less easy for hands and untrained eyes to make blunders in the former than in the latter. The mingling of two colors requires the nicest ocular judgment and most delicate manual skill to prevent glaring failure, whereas two shades of the same color can scarcely be put together with any positively bad effect. Many of the French combinations, such as pink and grape color, lemon and sage green, sky-blue and absinthe, are so audacious as to strike American eyes unfavorably and consequently domestic designs are more widely copied and better liked.

Home and dinner dresses are cut with single skirt and basque or pointed waist. Every now and then a rumor is rife of the revival of the old Empress waists, which round out over the hips, and are sewed to the skirt. But as these must inevitably bring about an entire revolution in styles, it is not probable they will come at present. Many of the trained skirts are made with the panier puff—somewhat worn last year—which prevents the look of scantiness that the removal of the over-skirt naturally offers. Much trimming in intricate patterns covers the skirts, and instead of remembering that something is gone, it appears as if a vast deal had been added.

Court trains have returned to our shores, probably out of compliment to the many distinguished foreigners who are constantly arriving. It is a handsome, even stately style, and belongs solely to rich materials and tall and elegant women. Instead, however, of being made of a different stuff from the petticoat it is generally simulated by the trimming; frequently long revers reaching from belt to hem, and held back by bunches of rose or pretty bows, or a barbe of lace drawn through a pearl buckle, outline the train.

THE SINGLE WOMAN.

One of the most extreme forms of contempt with which a good wife is ever visited is that in which some one calls her a "married old maid." Under such reproach she is expected to abase herself, and incontinently mend her ways, as far as may be, by abandoning precision and regularity in favor of the disorderly and slatternly style preferred by her reprover. One would naturally suppose, from the form of the anathema, that to be an "old maid" at all was to be in that state of outer darkness where the unconverted gnash their teeth, but to be a "married old maid" was simply to cling to evil after conversion and the experience of grace!

Yet what is the really obnoxious point eliciting the reproach? It is simply a confession that the single woman has discovered an economy of time, of labor, and of temper by having a place for every thing, and every thing in its place; that she has learned that only positive genius can afford to disregard method and routine, not because the routine, if genius could adopt it, would not be more advantageous in the long-run, but because Pegasus can not work in harness, while there are too few of us having positive genius to make it worth considering; and that, conscious of every body's obligations to the world and the Maker of the world, she disposes of herself and her surroundings in such wise as to meet those obligations in the readiest way possible. And is it, after all, so depraved a habit to insist, for instance, upon keeping free of dust and dirt? Sooner or later we must return to our primal element, we know; but need we hasten the day? Is it so unwise a course, that of having one's belongings in such order that a hand can be laid on them in the dark? Is it really, in point either of health or of gratification, so flagitious to take an exquisite care of the person? And is it a positive weakness to let the heart melt over a tale of woe, however false, or to extend kindness to the otherwise unprotected animals who partially shield one from loneliness? Yet all this is the short-coming of the typical "old maid." Qualities producing such results are the ones most ridiculed in her; and we must confess that we believe the picture has always been drawn by her two practical enemies, the single man and the slovenly wife.

According to our belief, it is the duty of every wife, as well as of every maid, to do all these things, and not to leave the rest undone. It does not follow that because she is neat and methodical, she is to harass the life out of every one who is not; that in order to have her wise way, she is to keep herself in everlasting strife. The quiet word, the discreet manner, obviate all that, and there is peace in the house, and order too. But for our own part, we have never succeeded in meeting the typical person spoken of

above. If she ever existed, she is, for all our research, as extinct as the dodo. The spinsters of our acquaintance are not gaunt and spiny furies; they are plump and debonaire women—two or three of them usually living together in the best of spirits, with few cares or vexations or restraints from the outer world; and if they have not the great blessings that happy marriages confer, they have at least the satisfaction of feeling that they are not the victims of unhappy marriages, and that their lives and nerves are unconsumed in the vain endeavor to pamper and please somebody out of whom all loving effort could only succeed in manufacturing a tyrant. They have their long friendships that have lasted since their school-girl days, and that they have found the time to cultivate and to enjoy; their house is the charmed resort of the children of married friends, of nephews and nieces; if they earn money, they work as they please, without hampering, and spend without interference; if they have an income, there is no one to accuse them of wasting it in those charities that delight their souls; their church, their sewing societies, their book clubs, their gossips, are perpetual pleasures; they have the minister to worship, if still unsatisfied—always a good lay figure for the purpose; and the children whom sometimes, in that great longing of the mother-heart which is a part of every woman, they adopt turn out quite as well as their neighbors' children do, if not a little better.

Or, if they are not the fortunate controllers of a home of their own, these single women whom we have met are sojourners in the families of sisters and brothers, and are acting there as a constant breakwater to every wave of trouble. They rock the cradle in these families, and take the baby to wean, and look over the wash, and mend the clothes, and darn the stockings; they remember the recipes for the richest cake and the best preserves, make the cookies and the turn-overs, spread the bread with jam between meals for the hungry little mouths, make up the luncheon baskets, catch together the surreptitious rents, compose quarrels, get punishments condoned, and smuggle up the longed-for bit of gingerbread to the child sent supperless to bed. In sickness they do the nursing, they do the sitting-up at night, they make the messes, take the doctor's directions, dress the blisters, and are present at the surgical operations. When company comes, the queen is in the parlor eating bread and honey—that is, entertaining and being entertained, for dignity requires it as the head of the house; but the single woman, fortunately, has no dignity to maintain; she can run errands in her morning gown, and see the too early caller, and is now to be found superintending and overlooking, and often doing, till all is as it should be, in order to maintain her sister's or brother's reputation for elegant hospitality. She is expected to do for every body, but to have little done for her; to feel for everybody, but to have no feelings of her own. In fact, she is performing the office of friend and lady, nurse, housekeeper, and servant; and usually with no other reward than the pittance of her clothes, which, by some unaccountable process of reasoning, are considered to be a gift. But what the house would be without this single woman in it—companion, reconciler, helper—one can hardly conjecture. Frequently she is well enough appreciated and known to be invaluable; but let the contrary be the case, and let sickness, or death, or even possibly a late marriage, take her away, and then only too soon it is realized that blessings brighten as they take their flight.

Even possibly marriage may take her away, we said just now; for it seems to be formally recognized, in total forgetfulness of the adage which says, "There never swam a goose so gray but what could find a mate," that the single woman never had the chance to "improve her condition." It never seems to be supposed for a moment that she is unmarried because she is faithful to an early attachment; because she will not debase herself by marriage without love; because she will not take a husband at a pinch; because, in short, she is too virtuous or too fastidious.

It is possible that there may come a time when people will learn to let alone that in the affairs of others which does not concern themselves, when the things belonging to an individual's private and inner life may remain unquestioned, and only conformity with the requirements of law and society be considered. In that time the "old maid" will receive an equal respect with the "old bachelor." Why this is not the case to-day is a riddle for the Sphinx. Certainly the one wrongs nobody by her celibacy, for it is not to be presumed but that, with her feminine need of leaning and loving, she would have married long ago if the right person had sought her; but the other, in the surplussage of women, has the world before him where to choose, and by his willfully single state he wrongs a good wife of a good husband, children of a protecting father, and the community of a member who has some better stake in society and the well-being of the race and the world than his poor stocks and bonds. Still the planet has moved, ever since the day of Galileo, at any rate; and as the typical "old maid" slowly fades into a thing of the past, and remains typical of nothing but the envy and malice of her slanderers, her successor espouses a career, a trade, an occupation, and is beginning to meet with whatever portion of honor may be due her as a human being, and one performing her duty in her day and generation: so that, after all, the wife may thank her stars if she is never saluted with worse reproach than that of being a "married old maid."

HOUSEHOLD RECEIPTS.

THE Druggists' Circular says that powdered nitre, moistened with water, applied to the face night and morning, will soon remove all traces of freckles.

CHARLOTTE RUSSE.—Line a cake mould both at the bottom and sides with small sponge cakes, fill it up with rich whipped cream, flavoured with vanilla, and put the mould into an ice pail. When required for serving take out the mould, rub it gently on the outside, and the charlotte will come out whole; serve instantly. (Proved.)

—SWEET.

INDIAN BAKED PUDDING.—Take two quarts of sweet milk, and boil one quart, and while boiling stir in it as much fine Indian meal as will make a very stiff batter; add a tablespoonful of salt, and make very sweet with molasses. Butter a pan, and pour the remaining quart of milk over it. Cut little bits of butter and put on the top, and bake two hours in a moderate oven. Any person who has never eaten of it before, will think he is eating custard.

THE AGE OF EGGS.—To assist our dyspeptic readers we (*Medical Press and Circular*) quote the following French wrinkle, to ascertain the age and consequent freshness of an egg:—Dissolve 120 grammes of common salt in a litre of water. If the egg is one day old it will sink to the bottom; if it was laid the day before, it will not reach the bottom; if three days old it floats; and if more than five it comes to the surface, and the shell projects more and more according to the staleness.

TO CLEAN LAMPS.—Bronzed lamps should be wiped carefully; if oil be frequently spilled over them, it will cause the bronzing to be rubbed off sooner than it would disappear by wear. Brass lamps are best cleaned with crocus, or rotten stone and sweet oil. Lacquered lamps may be washed with soap and water, but should not be touched with acid or very strong lye, else the lacquer will soon come off. When lamps are foul inside, wash them with potash and water; rinse them well; set them before the fire, and be sure that they are dry before oil is again put into them. Lamps will have a less disagreeable smell, if before using, the cottons be dipped into hot vinegar, and dried.

ECONOMICAL SCENTS.—As cheap perfumes are often required to fill little fancy bottles, such as are sold at the bazaars, toy-shops, arcades and other places, the following recipes for their manufacture will be found of service:

1. Spirits of wine, one pint; essence of bergamot, one ounce.
2. Spirits of wine, one pint; otto of santal, one ounce.
3. Spirits of wine, one pint; otto of French lavender, half ounce; otto of bergamot, half ounce; otto of cloves, one dram.
4. Spirits of wine, one pint; otto of lemon grass, three-fourths ounce; essence of lemons, half ounce.
5. Spirits of wine, one pint; otto of petit grain, quarter ounce; otto of orange peel, half ounce.

BAKED APPLE DUMPLINGS.—Fifteen apples; a quart and a half of flour made into pastry with three-quarters of a pound of lard and half a pound of butter; one and a half pounds of sugar. Pare and core the apples; fill the holes with sugar, two cloves, and two very small pieces of mace. Wrap each apple in a covering of the pastry; put them in a baking-dish; sprinkle with sugar; cut ten ounces of butter into small bits, and put them in the dish. Then fill in with water to within half an inch of the top. Put in the syrup a teaspoonful of cloves, and half as much mace. Put the dish in a hot oven with a cold lid which is gradually heated by putting on coals. If the syrup boils away too much, when the dumplings are half done add a little more water, and baste frequently with the syrup to prevent them from burning. Bake two hours and a half.

DIRECTIONS FOR CARPETS.—Carpets should be taken up and shaken thoroughly, if in constant use, as often as three or four times in a year, as the dirt that collects underneath them wears them out very fast. Straw kept under carpets will make them wear much longer, as the dirt will sift through, and keep it from grinding out. Carpets should be taken up as often as once a year, even if not much used, as there is danger of moths getting into them. If there is any appearance of moths in carpets when they are taken up, sprinkle tobacco or black pepper on the floor before the carpets are put down, and let it remain after they are laid down. When the dust is well shaken out of carpets, if there are any grease spots on them, grate on potter's clay very thick, cover them with a brown paper, and set on a warm iron. It will be necessary to repeat this process several times to get out all the grease.

OMELETTE.—Beat six eggs very light, the whites to a stiff froth that will stand alone, the yolks to a smooth thick batter. Add to the yolks a small cupful of milk, pepper and salt, lastly stir in the whites lightly. Have ready in a hot frying-pan a good lump of butter. When it hisses, pour in your mixture gently and set over a clear fire. It should cook in ten minutes at most. Do not stir, but contrive, as the eggs "set," to slip in a broad-bladed knife under the omelette to guard against burning at the bottom. The instant "hiss" of the butter as it flows to the hottest part of the pan will prove the wisdom and efficacy of the precaution. If your oven is hot, you may put the frying-pan in it as soon as the middle of the omelette is set. When done, lay a hot dish bottom upward on the top of the pan, and dextrously upset the latter to bring the browned side of the omelette uppermost. Eat soon, or it will fall.

FORGIVE AND FORGET.

Forgive and forget—it is better
To fling every feeling aside,
Than allow the deep cankered fester
Of revenge in thy breast to abide;
For thy step through life's path shall be lighter,
When the load from thy bosom is cast,
And the sky that's above thee be brighter,
When the cloud of displeasure has pass'd

Though thy spirit beat high with emotion
To give back an injustice again
Let it sink in oblivion's ocean,
For remembrance increases the pain.
And why should we linger in sorrow,
When its shadow is passing away?
Or seek to encounter to-morrow
The blast that o'er swept us to-day?

Oh, memory's a varying river,
And though it may placidly glide
When the sunbeams of joy o'er it quiver,
It foams when the storm meets its tide.
Then stir not its current to madness,
For its wrath thou wilt ever regret;
Though the morning beams break on thy sadness
Ere the sunset forgive and forget.

OLD WEATHER PROVERBS.

At a recent meeting of the Wiltshire Archaeological Society at Swindon, England, the Rev. A. C. Smith read a paper entitled "Wiltshire Weather Proverbs and Weather Fallacies," which has been very extensively reproduced by the English press. Some of the quaint old rhymes which it embodies are well worth preservation as curiosities of folk-lore, aside from any value they may have as guides in anticipating the character of future weather. We copy part of the paper below:

I proceed now to mention such of the proverbs as are in most general use among us, but I would premise that some of them are common to every other county in England. How true is the well-known saying,

"Evening grey, and morning red,
Sends the shepherd wet to bed;
Evening red, and morning grey,
Is the sure sign of a very fine day."

And this,

"Mackerel sky, mackerel sky,
Never long wet, and never long dry."

And this,

"Rain before seven,
Fine before eleven."

And this again,

"A rainbow in the morning
Is the shepherd's warning;
A rainbow at night
Is the shepherd's delight."

which is only our homely way of expressing the famous lines of Byron,

"Be thou the rainbow to the storms of life,
The evening beam that smiles the clouds away,
And tints to-morrow with prophetic ray."

Then, again, how true is the old Wiltshire saying:

"When the wind is northwest,
The weather is at the best;
But if the rain comes out of the east,
'Twill rain twice twenty-four hours at the least."

These are general proverbs, applicable to all times; but we have an unusual number of proverbs in Wiltshire, which describe the evils of too advanced vegetation in a precocious spring—indeed, on a careful comparison of all the Wiltshire weather proverbs with which I am acquainted, by far the larger portion refers to this fact, which is perhaps brought home to us in our confessedly cold county more than elsewhere. Thus for January we have,

"If the grass grows in Janiver,
It grows the worse for't all the year."

And again,

"A January spring
Is worth nothing."

For February,

"Of all the months in the year,
Curse a fair Februeer."

So again, for March, in true Wiltshire language,

"As many misteses in March,
So many frostises in May."

* In considering this prognostic, it should be borne in mind that in the former case the rainbow will appear in the west, and in the latter in the east,

And the well-known adage,

"If March comes in like a lion, it goes out like a lamb;
If it comes in like a lamb, it goes out like a lion."

For April again,

"A cold April,
The barn will fill."

And again

"April showers
Bring summer flowers."

And another, lauding the prolongation of the fierce winds of March,

"When April blows his horn,
'Tis good for both hay and corn."

While even for May we have,

"Mist in May, and heat in June,
Makes the harvest come right soon."

And again,

"Who doffs his coat on a winter's day,
Will gladly put it on in May."

And for June,

"A dripping June
Brings all things in tune."

Every one of these Wiltshire proverbs, relating to the six first months of the year, proclaims the acknowledged fact that a prolonged winter and a tardy spring bespeak more abundant crops and more assured plenty than the pleasanter, however unseasonable, warmth which sometimes gladdens our hearts in winter and early spring. Nor is this belief peculiar to our county or even to England; it is held quite as much in the south of Europe; for the Italians have a proverb, "January commits the faults, and May bears the blame," and it is a common saying in Spain, "A year of snow, a year of plenty." Moreover that such premature mildness of the seasons does not in reality advance vegetation, everybody who possesses a garden knows to his cost; and here again we have several famous Wiltshire proverbs relating to this fact, and containing very weighty truths. The one runs thus:

"Be it weal or be it woe,
Beans blow before May doth go."

Another says,

"Come it early, or come it late,
In May comes the corn-quake."

And a third,

"Plant your 'taters when you will,
They won't come up before April."

But, again, we have Wiltshire sayings which affirm what I believe to be an equally undeniable truth, that together with a prolonged winter, and a dripping spring, a dry summer is more to be desired by the husbandman. That, however, is a season we scarcely seem to have experienced this year, when the old Devonshire proverb, applicable enough in that rainy county, might have been quoted with much truth even here,

"The west wind always brings wet weather;
The east wind, wet and cold together;
The south wind surely brings us rain;
The north wind blows it back again."

Showing that from whatever point of the compass the wind blows, rain is sure to fall. * * *

There is a very curious old Wiltshire prejudice against a new moon occurring on a Saturday, which if not common in the county now, prevailed not many years since, but the origin of which, and the meaning of which I am at a loss to conjecture; it is handed down in the following proverb:

"A Saturday's moon
If it comes once in seven years
Comes once too soon."

Equally unfounded, though more easily accounted for, is the notion which prevails among our people that the weather on Friday differs from that of all other days; the saying is,

"To every other day in the week
Friday is not alike."

A somewhat obscurely-worded sentiment, but doubtless it originates in the same principle which causes sailors to dread putting out to sea on a Friday, viz., the custom, once religiously observed, of keeping Friday as a weekly fast.

The signs to be derived from the animal world are very numerous and very reliable, and are much observed amongst our people in consequence. As examples of the most common in this county, they will tell you that seldom indeed will a wet day be found to follow, when in the morning cows are seen lying down in their pastures; still more seldom when rooks are noticed high in the air, or swallows are seen at a great height hawking after flies; but rarest of all when three white butterflies are seen together, in the garden or field; the latter a sure sign of a fine day which I have hardly ever known to fail. They will tell you on the other hand that when the distant downs look near; or the common plover or pewee, which frequents our downs in such numbers, becomes restless; or the bees hurry home, and none leave the hive; or partridges grow wild; or sea-gulls make their appearance so far inland; or pigs carry straw in their mouths; or insects fly low; rain is at hand. These are but samples of many similar instances of unfailing instinct in regard to weather, which every student of nature admires in the various branches of the ani-

mal kingdom. I will conclude with the clever lines of Dr. Jenner, which sum up the matter very accurately:

"The hollow winds begin to blow,
The clouds look black, the glass is low,
The soot falls down, the spaniels sleep,
And spiders from their cobwebs creep;
Last night the sun went pale to bed,
The moon in halos hid her head;
The boding shepherd heaves a sigh,
For see, a rainbow spans the sky;
The walls are damp, the ditches smell,
Closed is the pink-eyed pimpernel;
The squalid toads at dusk are seen,
Slowly crawling o'er the green;
Loud quack the ducks, the peacocks cry,
The distant hills are looking high;
Hark, how the chairs and tables crack,
Old Betty's joints are on the rack;
And see yon rooks, how odd their flight—
They imitate the gliding kite,
Or seem precipitate to fall,
As if they felt the piercing hail;
How restless are the snorting swine,
The busy flies disturb the kine;
Low o'er the grass the swallow wings,
The cricket, too, how sharp she sings;
Puss on the hearth with velvet paws
Sits wiping o'er her whiskered jaws;
The wind, unsteady, veers around,
Or, settling, in the south is found;
The whirling wind the dust obeys,
And o'er the rapid eddy plays;
The leech disturbed is newly risen
Quite to the summit of his prison;
'Twill surely rain, I see, with sorrow,
Our jaunt must be put off to-morrow."

CURIOSITIES OF BUTTER AND CHURNING.

The art of making butter is by no means of modern date; this, the derivation of the word from the Greek *buturon*, and this again from *bous*, a cow, and *tueros*, cheese (literally cow's cheese) sufficiently indicates. But although the word is of Greek derivation, it was late before this people had any notion of it. Their great poets, Homer, Theocritus, and Euripides, who, like Shakespeare, drew the stores for their immortal creations from all sources of knowledge, do not speak of it, although they mention milk and cheese. Aristotle, the famous philosopher of olden time, first speaks of a fat substance contained in milk which, under certain circumstances, becomes like oil. Herodotus the Greek historian is the most ancient writer who, in his account of the Scythians, describes a process for making butter. The word *buturon* first occurs in Hippocrates who was nearly contemporary with Herodotus, in the fifth century B. C. "The Scythians," says Hippocrates, "pour the milk of mares into wooden vessels and shake it up violently making it foam, when the fat part which is light rises to the top and becomes *buturon*." Dioscorides, 33 B. C., says that good butter is prepared from the fattest milk of sheep or goats, by shaking it in a vessel till the fat separates. He says, also, that it can be melted and poured over pulse and vegetables, instead of oil, and might be used in pastry instead of oil. It is evident from this that drawn butter is not a modern invention, and that our pastry cooks have certainly learned something from their grandmothers.

But the principal use of butter among the Greeks and Romans was as an ointment and a medicine. The Romans were accustomed to anoint the bodies of their children with it to render them pliable, and the Burgundians extended its applications by using it as a hair oil. Plutarch, the prince of ancient story tellers, informs us that a Spartan lady once paid a visit to Bernice, the wife of Delotarus, and that one smelt so strongly of ointment and the other of butter, that neither could endure the other. We are not told what kind of ointment it was, but we can safely assert that the butter must have been very rancid.

The ancient Christians of Egypt burnt butter in their lamps instead of oil; and in more recent times, it was used for the same purpose in Roman Catholic churches, during the Christmas festival, to avoid the great consumption of olive oil. The Cathedral of Rouen has a tower called the butter tower, from the fact that the Archbishop of Rouen, in A. D. 1500, finding the supply of oil to fall during Lent, permitted the use of butter in lamps, on condition that each inhabitant should pay six deniers, with which money the tower was built. There are other "butter towers" at Notre Dame, Bourges, etc.

It is evident from the early history of butter that the Greeks and Romans did not use it to any extent in cooking or in the preparation of food, but Anaxandrides, a poet who lived shortly after Hippocrates, mentions a banquet where the Thracians ate butter, to the astonishment of the Greeks. But the article formerly called butter was oily and impure, wanting the firmness and consistency of that of modern times. It was consequently prone to decomposition, and its use limited. The ancients had usually accustomed themselves to good oil, and butter, in later times even, has been very little used in Italy, Spain, and the south of France, but was sold chiefly by the apothecaries for medicinal purposes. Most modern Biblical critics agree that the word translated butter in our version of the Scriptures means milk or cream, or, more properly, sour thick milk. In the 30th chapter of Proverbs, we find a verse beginning "the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, etc." This would certainly seem to describe the pre-

paration of butter, but the original Hebrew words *chaleb metz* signify squeezing or pressing, as for example, the udder of a cow; so that milking, and not making butter, is supposed to be meant. It is very probable that the formation of butter was discovered by accident in the transportation of milk in skins, which are still used in Barbary. In this country the Arabs churn their cream by suspending it contained in skins of goats in their tents and pressing it to and fro. Dr. Chandler, in a journey from Athens to Corinth, noted the mode of churning in the Levant. It consisted in securing the cream in skins, and then treading them with the feet. In Bengal, probably owing to indisposition to exertion in consequence of the excessive heat, they manage so make butter come by simply turning a stick around in the milk, but the product cannot be large. The inhabitants of the interior of Africa seem to be favored with respect to butter. The famous traveller Mungo Park, whose adventures delighted our boyish days, says that a tree grows there, resembling American oak, which bears a nut like an olive. When the kernel of this nut is boiled in water, it yields a butter, which the traveller asserts is whiter, firmer and of a richer flavor than any he ever tasted from cow's milk; and which will keep without salt for a whole year. The natives call it *shea toulou* or tree butter, and large quantities are made.

ON GETTING MARRIED.

Why I should take in hand to perpetrate an article on "getting married" when I have never been married in my life, and, consequently, cannot be expected to know much about it, may surprise those of my readers who consider it worth while to devote a thought to the subject, either one way or the other. But I maintain that it is the very fact of my not having entered what is called, with bitter irony, "the happy state," which should be my recommendation. I stand, as it were, afar off—I am perched upon an eminence where I can view the ceremony in all its ghastly details; I am far removed from the supposed enthralling powers of raven or auburn hair, of black eyes or blue; I am far out of the reach of the temptations of "dimpled smiles," whatever they may be, and the reddest of cherry lips have no charms for me whatever. My treatment of the subject may, therefore, be relied on as being absolutely impartial; and, if I may lean just a little towards the side of my own sex, I am perfectly justified in doing so, as I have never been "retained" by the other side. I have never been able to satisfactorily settle in my own mind whether getting married is supposed to be subject to rejoicing or mourning. Certainly, all the weddings I have seen would go to prove the latter. The bride has always been in tears—the bridegroom has always looked profoundly miserable. She seems to be making the best of a bad job, and he seems to be hoping that some one will charitably step forward and stop the ceremony at the point where the officiating clergyman asks if anyone knows "any just cause or impediment," &c. There is one theory I wish to advance with regard to the bridegroom, and that is that he has never paid for his wedding garments when he enters the church; he seems in constant fear lest his tailor should be at hand with his "little bill." Observe the way in which he sneaks from the hired carriage—which generally has an appropriately funereal appearance—and glances furtively round! See how ill at ease he seems in these unpaid-for specimens of the tailor's art—what a sickly hue is reflected on his sorrowful countenance by his lavender tie. Gentle reader, or fair reader, or you, sir, who have passed through the ordeal, and, consequently, must know all about it, tell me—is there anything in my theory? Of course, in this exceedingly watery climate of ours, we must expect a constant succession of heavy downpours and short, sharp showers. But why should it always rain when marriages are going on? Are not the principal actors sufficiently depressed already? But for the singularly inappropriate nature of the simile, one might say it was heaping coals of fire on their unfortunate heads. I will not go so far as to say that every marriage yet celebrated has taken place on a wet day—I can only confine myself to my own experience. We will say I have seen, or "assisted," at a dozen weddings—well, twelve of that dozen have come off in the rain. Next to the fainting, the tears, the *sal volatile*, and the other accompaniments at the altar, the scene at the church door is worthy the most attention. Have you ever watched the group of old ladies in wonderful patters and mysterious bonnets, with noses red from the morning air, who congregate to see the procession? It is quite a study. You never see a man there. I can only remember having seen a man present on an occasion of this sort once. He was the very ghost of a man—his face deeply marked with lines which told eloquently of care and sorrow, and although evidently not more than forty, there was a liberal sprinkling of white in his hair. He was attired in clothes which would have been disdained by any scarecrow with an atom of self-respect, and altogether appeared thoroughly miserable and dejected. Approaching the church, he inquired of the females there assembled, "What was going on?" "A wedding," replied a dozen eager voices. The man turned away with a expression on his face in which contempt and sadness were strangely blended, and in a low, heart-broken tone, said—"I never saw but one wedding in my life that was my own."

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

ONE inch of rain-fall distributes 100 tons of water over an acre of land.

A New England mechanic has invented an apparatus for propelling canal boats by forcing a current of compressed air out against the water at the stern.

PINE leaves are said to be utilized in Europe as a substitute for hair in upholstery, and will make a kind of flannel very superior for hygienic purposes.

A careful calculator says, a bar of iron worth \$5 is worth when manufactured into horse-shoes, \$10.50; into table knives, \$180; buttons and buckles, \$1,035; springs of watches, \$250,000.

THERE are 400 religious journals in the United States. The Methodists have 47, the largest number; then come the Catholics, who number 41; the Baptists, 35; the Presbyterians, 29; the Episcopalians, 21; Lutherans, 14; German Reformed, 14; Jews, 9; and Congregationalists, 8.

AN Italian sonnet justly, as well as elegantly, compares procrastination to the folly of a traveler who pursues a brook till it widens into a river, and is lost in the sea. The toils, as well as risks, of an active life are commonly overrated, so much may be done by the diligent use of ordinary opportunities; but they must not always be waited for; we must not only strike the iron while it is hot, but strike it till it is made hot.

SPECTACLES were first invented in the thirteenth century. Francisco Redi, in a treatise on spectacles, says that they were invented between the years 1280 and 1311 A. D., by a monk of Florence named Alexander de Spina. Muschenbroeck says that it is inscribed on the tomb of Salvinus Armatus, a nobleman of Florence, who died in 1317, that he was the inventor of spectacles. By others Roger Bacon, in England, who died in 1292, has been considered the inventor.

THE BREAD OF RECONCILIATION.—In parts of Switzerland, when two men have quarreled with each other, and their friends are anxious to see them reconciled, they endeavor to bring them unawares under the same roof. If the two enemies sit down at the same table they are pledged to peace. They break a piece of bread together, and are friends once more. It would be a good idea if every boy or girl who quarrels with another boy or girl, should "make up," and become reconciled the moment they happened to eat bread together in the same county; at least that is what we think about it.

TAKING MEDICINE.—Napoleon, who was a man of great intuitions, once said to the Italian physician, Antommarchi: "Believe me, we had better leave off all these remedies. Life is a fortress which neither you nor I know anything about. Why throw obstacles in the way of its defense? Its own means are superior to all the apparatus of your laboratories. Monsieur Covisart candidly agreed with me that all your filthy mixtures are good for nothing. Medicine is a collection of uncertain prescriptions, the results of which, taken collectively, are more fatal than useful to mankind. Water, air and cleanliness are the chief articles in my pharmacopoeia."

THE ONION AS FOOD.—It is stated that the onion forms one of the common and universal supports of life in Spain and Portugal. Authority shows, according to analysis, that the dried onion contains from twenty-five to thirty percent. of gluten, and ranks in this respect with the nutritious pea and the grain. "It is not merely as a relish that the wayfaring Spaniard eats his onion with his humble crust of bread as he sits by the refreshing spring; but it is because experience has long proved that, like the cheese of the English laborer, it helps to sustain his strength also, and adds, beyond what its bulk would suggest, to the amount of nourishment which his simple meal supplies."

HOW TO IRON LINEN.—A *Hearth and Home* correspondent says that linen if placed immediately after being ironed near the stove or in the hot sun, is stiffer when dry than if it is permitted to dry slowly. It is a good plan to lay collars and small articles on a waiter, and set them on a kettle or other support on the stove, till they are quite dry. Sometimes the iron will stick in a manner perfectly unaccountable; if it is rubbed on a board on which fine salt has been sprinkled, and then passed over a brown paper with wax in its folds, the sticking propensities will be checked. A bowl of clear water and a clean old linen cloth, is useful to remove any specks the linen may acquire before or while being ironed.

SCALLOPED OYSTERS.—Crush and roll several handfuls of Boston or other fryable crackers. Put a layer in the bottom of a buttered pudding-dish. Wet this with a mixture of the oyster liquor and milk, slightly warmed. Next have a layer of oysters. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, and lay small bits of butter upon them. Then another layer of moistened crumbs, and so on until the dish is full. Let the top layer be of crumbs, thicker than the rest, and beat an egg into the milk you pour over them. Stick bits of butter thickly over it, cover the dish, set it in the oven, bake half an hour; if the dish is large, remove the cover, and brown by setting it upon the upper grating of oven, or by holding a hot towel over it!

HOW TO MEASURE A SHOE.—Boots and shoes, as worn in civilized countries, go far toward distorting the beauty of the feet. In measuring a foot for a boot or shoe, the first thing which should be considered is the place for the great

toe. Upon this toe, in walking, the weight of the whole body turns at every step; in a natural foot, therefore, the middle of the toe should be in a straight line with the heel. A central straight line drawn from the point of the great toe to the middle of its root, if continued, would pass exactly to the middle of the heel. But, by the misfitting boot usually worn, the point of the toe is pressed inward, the root outward. No last, or model of a foot already injured by wearing ill-fitting boots or shoes should ever be made of the exact size of such a foot.

OIL-CLOTH MADE FROM CARPET.—The following recipe is communicated to the *Cultivator and Country Gentleman*, by a correspondent, who signs herself "Daisy Eyebright": Nail the old Brussels carpet loosely to the floor, in a large attic or wood-house chamber not in use. Then paint it over with a thick coat of linseed oil and burnt umber. Let it dry in thoroughly; add a coat of good varnish. Let that dry for a week or two, and it can be scrubbed and washed with milk and water like any oil-cloth. Paint it on the wrong side, and nail it down closely, for it need not be taken up for many years. As the varnish and paint wear off, renew them, and thus it will last four times as long as common oil-cloth. If "B" chooses, he can ornament it with a border of scarlet, green or blue lines.

THE INSANITY OF DRINK.—Not the least remarkable feature in modern drinking habits, is the fact that drinkers will imbibe the most horrible concoctions rather than not drink at all. There is something intelligible in a man getting drunk on good wine or beer; but what possible pleasure or advantage can be derived from drinking such stuff as that termed in Edinburgh "hard ale," which, it appears from an analysis submitted to the Public Health Committee of Edinburgh, is composed of certain vegetable extracted matter of similar origin to that found in ordinary beer in a state of decomposition, communicating to the liquid a highly obnoxious taste and odor. "The liquid," adds the analyst, "consists mainly of decomposed beer mixed with water, and cannot fail, if partaken of in any considerable quantity, to be detrimental to health." There are it seems, five shops for the sale of this delightful mixture situated in different parts of the old town at Edinburgh.

PECULIARITIES OF LANGUAGE.—In our language we miss many of the dainty words in which the French language abounds, and which possess so much meaning. Yet all languages are equally defective. The Hindoos are said to have no word for "friend." The Italians have no equivalent for our "humility." The Russian dictionary gives a word the definition of which is, "not to have enough buttons on your foot-man's waistcoat;" a second means to "kill over again;" a third "to earn by dancing." The Germans call a thimble a "finger-hat," which it certainly is, and a grasshopper a "hay-horse." A glove with them is a "hand-shoe," showing that they wore shoes before gloves. The French, strange to say, have no verb "to stand," nor can a Frenchman speak of "kicking" any one. The nearest approach he, in his politeness, makes to it is, to threaten to "give a blow with his foot," the same thing, probably, to the recipient in either case, but it seems to want the directness, the energy, of our "kick." The terms "up-stairs" and "down-stairs" are also unknown in French.

THE CHIN.—Fortune tellers are generally skillful physiognomists, and all the features of the human face do their share in enlightening the understanding of seers. The chin, at the present day, is rather difficult to read, on account of the increasing custom of wearing a beard. A good chin should neither project nor retreat much. A very retreating chin denotes weakness, and a very projecting one harsh strength, united with firmness amounting to obstinacy. A pointed chin generally denotes acuteness and craftiness. A soft, fat, double chin, generally denotes a love of good living, and an angular chin, judgment and firmness. Flatness of chin implies coldness; a round dimpled chin, goodness; a small chin, fear; sharp indentings in the middle of the chin point to a cool understanding. The color and texture of the skin, and of the hair and beard, have also a direct harmony with the features; these should be studied more than they have been. A facility in drawing faces is of great use to the student of physiognomy, as it enables him to note peculiarities of feature which no written description would be capable of preserving.

NATTY BUMPO'S GRAVE.—All who have read the famous "Leather Stocking" novels of J. Fenimore Cooper, will remember the hero of the five novels, who goes by a different name in each book. In the best of the series—"The Pioneers"—he is known as "Leather Stocking." It will be news, more or less interesting, to many of our readers, to know that the remains of the original of the character—who was called "Natty Bumpo" in the flesh—are buried in this county. The novelist makes his hero die on the prairie in Illinois, and from the description of his death Thackeray seems to have taken some hints to make the death of Colonel Newcome more impressive. But the fact seems to be that "Natty" is buried in the old Baptist burying-ground at Hoosick Falls; and there, a few days ago, we saw the weather-beaten wooden plank which marks his grave. The board stands about two feet out of the ground and is rounded on top. On the face fronting the street is painted the inscription, "The Grave of Leatherstocking." It stands almost directly east of the centre of the church. So it seems that it was in Hoosick and not on the prairie that the old scout and hunter said "Here," when his name was called by the irresistible voice that shall summon us all.

SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL.

THE greatest care should be taken in the preparation of food for the sick. It should be just right, or the weakened and sensitive appetite will refuse it. If gruel is scorched in preparing, or whatever you attempt fails the first time to be as nice as it should be, throw it away and make more. Bescrupulously neat in serving it up. Use your prettiest dishes and finest napkins. Something depends upon looks; and the eye of a sick person may be unusually critical. Except in the preparation of light puddings, the process of baking is inadmissible for the sick. Roasting is better—a light roast potato is sometimes very acceptable. Meats should be delicately broiled, except when boiled for broths.

LIE DOWN AND REST.—Dr. Hall says the best medicines in the world, more efficient than all the potions of the *materia medica*, are warmth, rest, cleanliness and pure air. Some persons make it a virtue to brave disease "to keep up" as long they can move a foot or wiggle a finger, and it sometimes succeeds; but in others the powers of life are thereby so completely exhausted that the system has lost all ability to recuperate, and slow and typhoid fever sets in and carries the patient to a premature grave. Whenever walking or work is an effort, a warm bed and cool room are the very first indispensables to a sure and speedy recovery. Instinct leads all beasts and birds to quietude and rest the very minute disease or wounds assail the system.

So much nonsense is talked about disinfectants, that we gladly reproduce the pith of a paper read by Dr. Letheby on the right materials for sanitary employment, and the best way of using them. To disinfect and render safe articles in a sick room, all clothing, bedding, &c., should be boiled or plunged into boiling water before being taken from the room, and in addition to that they should be steeped in a solution of four fluid ounces of carbolic acid (Calvert's No. 5) to a gallon of water. All superfluous carpets and curtains should be removed from the room early in the case, and free ventilation and the utmost cleanliness should be always practised. As regards the use of aerial disinfectants, acid vapours are the most effective, such as chlorine or chloride of lime, or acetic acid; for these only are capable of destroying the vitality of vaccine lymph, and, therefore, by inference, of other contagious elements. It is only after the room is vacated, however, that the best agent, which is burning sulphur, can be used. Plenty of this shut for eight hours makes all wholesome. Salts of iron and alumina, in the proportion of 1 to 3,500, are the best neutralisers of sewage; while vegetable charcoal, broken small and placed upon trays above the outlets of sewers or drains, will disarm noxious emanations. A few drops of Condy's Fluid, or of chlorozone, will purify suspicious water—for which also charcoal, from time to time well aerated, is by far the best and safest filtering agent. Charcoal respirators of the Stenhouse pattern will keep a man from catching malarious fever in Indian or African swamps.

THE TEETH.—Dr. Hayes, an eminent surgeon-dentist residing in London, gives the following useful hints about the care of the teeth. They are simple, timely, and deserve attention:

"In the first place, the teeth should be fairly used. By this I mean, not made to perform the duties of crackers for nuts, experimented on to ascertain their strength, or by ladies to rival scissors in cutting thread; for rest assured—in every case, more particularly the last—the party having recourse to such practices will surely some day rue them; the teeth so unwittingly injured being always the first to part company from their fellows. Those who indulge in such or similar habits may truly be called the dentist's friends. Cleanliness is absolutely essential for the preservation of the teeth, and they should be brushed at least morning and evening, that any feculence which may be attached to them, either during sleep from the stomach, or by day from meals, may not be allowed permanently to adhere, causing, firstly, discoloration, then tartar, and subsequently, if I may so express myself, undermining the constitution of one or more, as from their position they may be more or less liable to corrosion. In order that the teeth should look natural—that is, retain their natural color—a dentifrice free from the smallest particle of acid should be used at the matin hour, and the mouth rinsed with tepid water, for extremes of heat and cold are most highly prejudicial, not only to their color, but also to their durability; and I know no method so simple of converting a really useful and ornamental set into one of pain and subsequent extinction, than the use of washing in either one or the other. The person who habituates him or herself, to any extent, to hot soup, tea, or other drinks, assuredly rivals the friend to the dentist just named. Brushes for the teeth should be of medium substance of bristle, and those made on what is called the penetrating principle are best. I would also observe that children at an early age should be instructed in the use of the toothbrush, and taught the value and importance of the teeth, in order to inculcate habits of cleanliness and a due appreciation of the ornaments of the mouth. A brush properly selected (not too hard) may be used by children of five years of age, every morning; and by being part and parcel of the general ablution, and thus directing habitual attention to the teeth, a useful and cleanly habit will be engendered which will insure for them proper care through life."

HUMOROUS SCRAPS.

When is a lady like a show-window?—When she takes great pains with her sash.

A FRENCH writer has described a young lady as a creature that ceases to kiss gentlemen at twelve and begins again at twenty.

In a letter to a friend, a young lady of Illinois states that she is not engaged, but she sees a cloud above the horizon about as large as a man's hand.

An old lady from the country, with six unmarried daughters, went to Augusta, Ga., the other day hunting for the patrons of husbandry. She meant business.

WESTERN women are grumbling terribly because the managers of the agricultural fairs don't give at least a year's notice when they offer prizes for the finest babies.

THE rallying cry in Kansas, upon which newspapers of divers views are unanimous is: "Let no man be elected to office who owes over five years' subscription to a local paper."

RESPECT for old age never had a brighter illustration than in the case of the young lady who always refuses to go to the wash-tub when her mother or grand-mother is present.

A GUSHING, but ungrammatical, editor says: "We have received a basket of fine grapes from our friend—, for which he will please accept our compliments, some of which are nearly an inch in circumference."

A MEMPHIS reporter who paraphrased the prevailing weather without even once alluding to "the beautiful snow," was promptly ejected from the fourth story window, as unworthy a position on a first-class journal.

WHEN you see two young persons seated in the centre of a pew in church, you may make up your mind they are engaged, or going to be; but when one is at the head and the other at the foot of the pew, you can immediately determine that they are married.

MISS POPE, one evening in the greenroom of the theatre, expatiating in the warmth of her early enthusiasm on the genius of Garrick, and on his fine features, exclaimed, "What an eye he had! It looked as if it could pierce through a deal board." "Then," said Wewitzer, "it must have been a gimlet eye."

A MAN at Trenton, who found several thousand dollars over two years ago, and has advertised it every day since that time, gets great credit for his honesty. Any man would have quit looking for an owner long ago; yet this Trenton man keeps on advertising. But he owns the paper in which it is advertised, and pays at full rates out of the money fund. After three years more of advertising the whole amount will have been absorbed.

A MISTAKE happened some time ago at a funeral in Mary-le-Bone. The clergyman had gone on with the service, until he came to that part which says, "Our deceased brother or sister," without knowing whether the deceased was male or female. He turned to one of the mourners, and asked whether it was a brother or sister. The man very innocently replied, "No relation at all, Sir, only an acquaintance."

"OH, I met such a beautiful girl in the street to-day!" said a gentleman to a lady friend, to whom he was doing the agreeable, not many evenings since. "She was dressed in deep mourning. I think I have never seen a sweeter face." "Who could it have been?" said his listener, smoothing down her bombazine dress, and glancing at the crape folds to see if they were properly adjusted. "Pretty, you say? Who could it have been?—I wasn't out."

A CERTAIN Sunday-school teacher was in the habit of making a collection in his juvenile class for missionary purposes. He was not a little surprised, however, one day, to find a bank-note among the weight of copper. He was not long in finding it to be of a broken bank; and on asking the class who put it there, the donor was pointed out to him by one who had seen him deposit it. "Didn't you know that this note was good for nothing?" said the teacher. "Yes," answered the boy. "Then what did you put it in the box for?" The boy coolly replied, "I didn't s'pose the little heathens would know the difference, and thought it would be just as good for them."

YEARS ago, when the cost of postage was much greater than at present, jokes were sometimes played off, the fun of which was to make a man pay heavy postage for very unnecessary information. When Collins, the artist, was once with some friends around him, one of them resisted every attempt to induce him to stay to supper. He withdrew, and the friends in council over the banquet resolved that the sulky guest should be punished. Accordingly, on the following day, Collins sent him a folded sheet of foolscap, on which was written, "After you left, we had stout and oysters." The receiver understood what was meant, but he was equally resolved to have his revenge. Accordingly, biding his time, he transmitted, in a feigned hand, a letter to Collins, in which the painter read only, "Had you?" There-with the joke seemed at an end; but Collins would have the last word. He waited and waited till the matter was almost forgotten, and then the writer of the last query opened a letter one morning in which he had the satisfaction of finding an answer to it in the laconic but expressive words, "Yes, we had."

OUR PUZZLER.

178. SQUARE WORDS.

1. A bird; a bird; to prevent; pluck; to go in.
2. A bird; a bet; a town of Moravia; a banquet; veracity.
3. A bird; a man's name; to happen; of a pleasing manner; to have done wrong.

179. ANAGRAMS ON WRITERS.

1. Roll the top on any; 2. Children's cakes; 3. C. M. find his other jerk; 4. Ruth, the sky clear; 5. Reap in May and cite; 6. R. N. jest by chop; 7. I am worth all his rosin in war; 8. Must need day; 9. Urge egg oats as usual; 10. Tarry hunter bowl; 11. Give us a dust ram; 12. W. Agne may us thus.

180. ENIGMA.

It's taken with us when we die;
What some almost possess;
What the miser gives away;
He can do nothing less.

The prisoner says it in defence
When placed before the bar;
What some may be to others,
Who perfect strangers are.

What no one cares to work for;
What every one should owe;
What you may stand in need of;
I trust it may be so.

It is of no importance
If you should be in doubt;
So should you fail to guess it,
You will be nothing out.

181. SQUARE WORDS.

1. An entertainment; a place north of Europe, to worship; toobey; one of the productions of nature.
2. A female name; parts of time; inhabitants of Denmark; a princess's name; patient animals.
3. An upright position; more docile; to divert; bird's dwellings; garment.

182. WORD PUZZLES.

1. A class of animals; 2. Space; 3. A light, quick blow; 4. An entrance; 5. A novelist; 6. A kind of igneous rock; 7. A color; 8. To dwell; 9. A state in America.
- The above, read backwards name—1. A plant; 2. A marsh; 3. A short pipe; 4. A measurer; 5. A town of Russia; 6. A portion; 7. A poet; 8. Mischief; 9. A great chain of mountains.

183. PUZZLE.

Now if you will but carefully fix
What's always called the number six
Right just in front to one who was wise,
When both are joined aright, you'll see
Something belonging to you and me—
Cheeks, chin, forehead, and eyes.

184. PHONETIC CHARADE.

When the scorching north winds of Australia's
fair clime
Waft the dust-storm o'er many a league,
How my first is esteemed in this wearisome
time
By the fair sex, worn out with fatigue!

When her wintry dull evenings pass slowly
away,
And one feels next a loss what to do;
How plainly the third of the clock seems to say.
"The hours will not hasten for you."

Yes, the winter seems long, but he has to give
place
To the heat of the sun, by-and-by;
Incontestable proof of Old Time's rapid pace,
Which the greatest whole cannot deny.

185. METAGRAMS.

1. Complete, I am a church official; but change my head each time, I become a vegetable, an actor, and not fat.
2. Complete, I am a man's name; change my head each time, I become to stay behind, to join together, a boy's name.
3. Complete, I am a bird; change my head each time, I become a boy's name, to listen, part of a tree, a Scotch island.

186. ANIMALS ENIGMATICALLY EXPRESSED.

1. An insect and to run away; 2. A serpent and a consonant; 3. A kind of doctor and the end of August; 4. A man devoted to religion and two-thirds of an optic; 5. A man's name and everything; 6. A fire-arm, transposed; 7. Leather and a plant, curtailed; 8. A fruit or vegetable, transposed; 9. A prop, transposed, and three letters from dark; 10. What a river does, transposed; 11. A thousand and a flower, transposed; 12. Half a flower, a fish, and a false hood, transposed.

187. CHARADES.

I.

My first is merely half,
My second is quite round;
Both combined, my second of
A half there will be found.

II.

My first is very dear to me,
Although he's rather wild;

How oft I've nursed him on my knee.
When he was a little child.
My second is a useful link
To join my first to second;
And by all scholars is, I think,
A proposition reckon'd.
My third some people dabble in,
But often trouble find;
They're sure in it to lose or win,
If all are of one mind.
My whole was given unto me
Upon my marriage day,
Now, riddling friends, what can I be?
Come, tell to me, I pray.

188. DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

A hint; a battle in the Peninsular war;
Islands in Polynesia; a general engaged in the
Russian war; a fortress on the Danube; a king
of Essex; a river in South America.
The initials name a famous philosopher of the
sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the
initials give his nationality.

ANSWERS.

125. CENTRAL DELETIONS.—1. Horse, hose;
2. Peter, peer; 3. Point, pont; 4. Mitre, mire;
5. Coronet, cornet; 6. Cobra, cora; 7. Salve;
save; 8. Sinde, side.

126. LITERAL CHARADE.—Liverpool.

127. CHARADE.—Sugar-cane.

128. ANAGRAMS.—1. David Livingstone; 2. Tom Hood; 3. Charles Bradlaugh; 4. Honourable Auberon Herbert; 5. Sir Charles Dilke; 6. Daniel de Foe; 7. Abraham Cowley; 8. Samuel Taylor Coleridge; 9. George Gordon Lord Byron; 10. Oliver Wendell Holmes; 11. Ben Jonson.

129. VERBAL CHARADE.—Robert Lowe.

130. DOUBLE ARITHMOREM.—Masulipatam, Visagapatam, thus: Moghile V, Acroter I, Samos, Urmia, Lember G, Idria, Preco P, Almor A, Theresienstadt, Anatolia, Mussendo M.

131. LOGOGRAPH.—C. I. V. I. L.

132. EXTRACTIONS.—Hoarse, Horse, Hose, Hoe.

133. SQUARE WORDS.—

1.	2.
REVERT	LEVER
EDITOR	ELOPE
VERONA	VALVE (valve)
EVISIV	ELATE
RAMBLE	REVEL
TRAVEL	

CAISSA'S CASKET.

SATURDAY, NOV. 29, 1873.

* * All communications relating to Chess must be addressed "CHECKMATE, London, Ont."

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SOLUTION TO PROBLEM NO. 21.

White. Black.

1. Kt. to K. 3rd
 1. K. to Q. 5th
- If K. to K. or Q. 3rd, then 2. B. to Q. B. 7th etc.

2. Q. to K. B. 5th
2. Any.

3. Q. mates.

SOLUTION TO PROBLEM NO. 22.

White. Black.

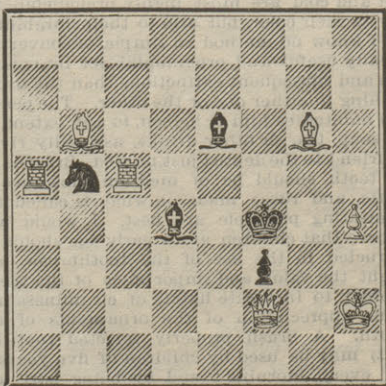
1. B. to K. B. 6th
1. Any.

2. Mate acc.

PROBLEM NO. 23.

By A. SCHMITT.

BLACK.



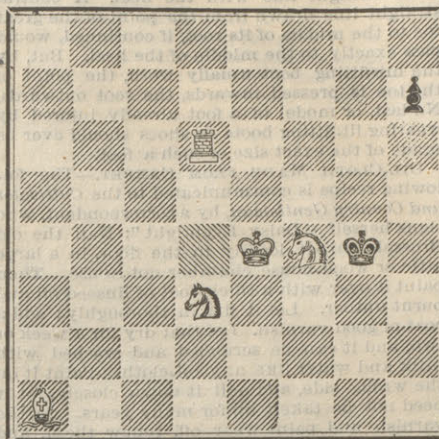
WHITE.

White to play and mate in two moves.

PROBLEM NO. 24.

By F. W. FORDER.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play and mate in three moves.

INSTRUCTION IN CHESS.

By "CHECKMATE."

GAME NO. 17.

We have a pretty little game introducing another defence to this beautiful attack:

Ruy Lopez Attack.

White.

MR. BIRD.

1. P. to K. 4th
2. Kt. to K. B. 3rd
3. B. to Q. Kt. 5th

Black.

MR. DE VERE.

1. P. to K. 4th
2. Kt. to Q. B. 3rd
3. Kt. to K. B. 3rd

This move was much in favor a few years ago, when the move of 3. P. to Q. R. 3rd was looked upon as utterly useless. Now, the great majority of the best authorities agree that the move to the text is inferior to P. to Q. R. 3rd, though for the sake of variety it is frequently adopted.

4. P. to Q. 4th

The positions in this variation of the Ruy Lopez are not very dissimilar to those given in the previous games in this opening. White may now proceed to defend the P. attacked by the K. Kt. by playing P. to Q. 3rd, or he may Castle. The move in the text, however, is better than the first; and to equal the second.

4. P. takes P.

Should he take P. with Kt., White Castles, and Black is likely to lose a piece.

5. P. to K. 5th
6. Castles.

5. Kt. to K. 5th

If 6. Kt. takes Q. P. instead of Castling, Black replies 6. B. to K. 2nd, when White may Castle.

6. B. to K. 2nd

Probably as good a way of continuing the defence as 6. P. to Q. R. 3rd, forcing an exchange now, or after Kt. to Q. B. 4th, with an even game.

7. Kt. takes P.
8. Q. takes Kt.

7. Kt. takes Kt.
8. Kt. to Q. B. 4th

Were the B. now at Q. R. 4th, this move would force an exchange of pieces, and the game would be equal.

9. P. to K. B. 4th
10. P. to K. B. 5th

9. P. to Q. Kt. 3rd

The attack from this point is capitally sustained. White can afford to disregard the threatened loss of the exchange.

11. Q. to K. Kt. 4th
10. Kt. to Q. Kt. 6th

If P. takes Kt., Black responds with B. to Q. B. 4th winning the Queen for his two minor pieces.

12. Q. takes K. Kt. P.
13. P. to K. B. 6th
14. K. to R. 1st
15. P. to K. 6th

11. Kt. takes R.
12. R. to K. B. 1st
13. B. to Q. B. 4th (ch)
14. Kt. takes P.

This is conclusive.

15. P. takes K. B. (ch)
17. R. to K. 1st (ch)
15. Kt. to Q. 5th
16. R. takes P.
17. B. to K. 2nd

And White Mates in two moves.

GAME NO. 18.

Played between Messrs. H. D. Smith, of Michigan; and Capt. Mackenzie, of New York, at the late American Chess Congress.

Ruy Lopez Attack.

Black.

MR. SMITH.

1. P. to K. 4th
2. Kt. to K. B. 3rd
3. B. to Q. Kt. 5th
4. Castles.

White.

MR. MACKENZIE.

1. P. to K. 4th
2. Kt. to Q. B. 3rd
3. Kt. to K. B. 3rd
4. Kt. takes P.

The Chess Player's Chronicle gives B. to K. 2nd as the best move for the second player at this point.

5. P. to Q. 4th

There can be no doubt, R. to K. 1st is better here.

Attacking the Bishop. He might now have played B. to K. 2nd.

6. B. takes Kt.

6. Q. Kt. P. takes B.

Better than Q. P. takes P. on account of 7. P. takes P.

7. Kt. takes P.

We should prefer P. takes P.

7. B. to K. 2nd
8. Castles
9. P. to K. B. 3rd
10. Kt. to K. 6th

Prettily played. It is obvious White cannot take the Kt. with Pawn, without involving the loss of the game, by P. takes P. and then Q. to K. R. 5th, etc.

11. Q. to K. R. 5th
12. Kt. to Q. B. 3rd
13. R. to K. B. 3rd
14. K. to B. 2nd
15. R. to K. R. 3rd
16. K. to Kt. 3rd
17. K. to Kt. 4th
18. Q. takes Q.
19. P. to Q. Kt. 3rd
20. Kt. to K. 4th
10. R. to K. 1st
11. B. to K. B. 1st
12. B. to Q. R. 3rd
13. R. to K. 8th (ch)
14. Q. to K. 1st
15. R. to K. B. 8th (ch)
16. Kt. takes P. (ch)
17. Q. takes Kt. (ch)
18. P. takes Q.
19. B. to Q. 3rd
20. B. to K. 7th (ch)

And White wins.

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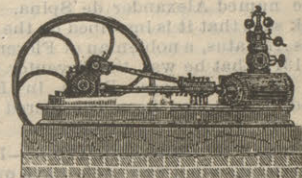
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